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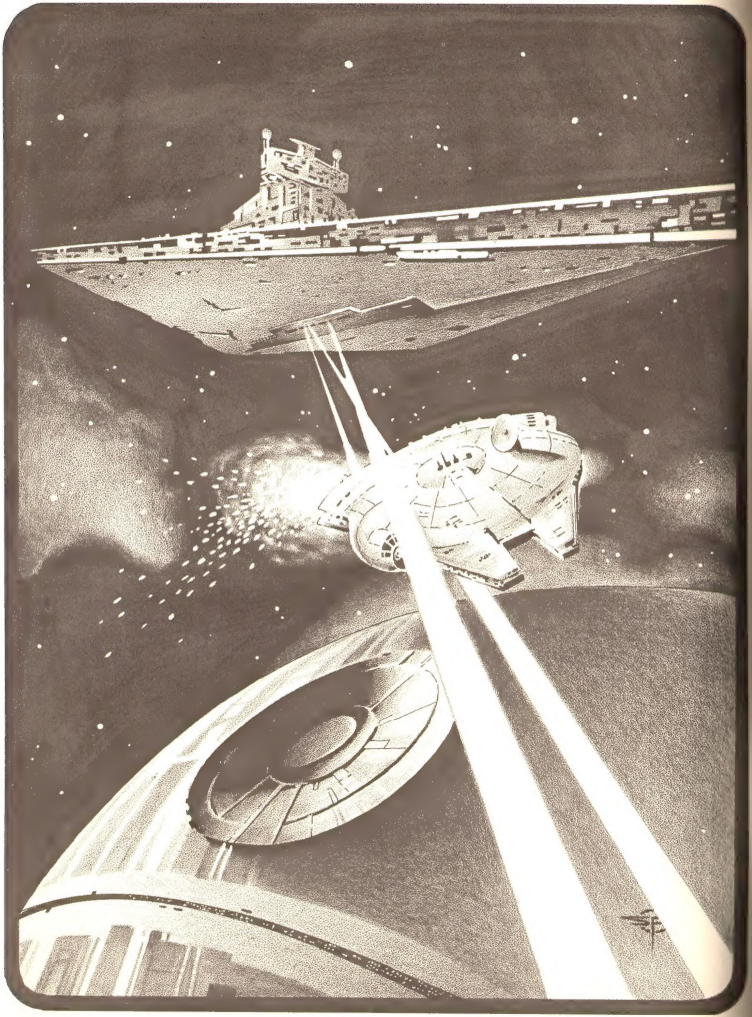

ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR 139

SPECIAL STAR WARS ISSUE

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FRONT COVER - RALPH FOWLER
INSIDE FRONT COVER - STEVEN FABIAN
BACK COVER - MORRIS SCOTT DOLLENS

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OCTOBER 1977

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CIRCULATION: 2100 PER ISSUE

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AVAILABLE BACK ISSUES OF THE RB&CC ARE LISTED BELOW. THEY ARE $1.75 EACH FROM THE S.F.C.A.

#'s 57, 58, 88, 89, 90, 96, 97, 106, 107, 120, 121, 123, 124, 125, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138

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THE ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT TWO ISSUES OF THE RBCC ARE: NOV. 18
JAN. 6
THE RBCC IS PUBLISHED EVERY 7 WEEKS.

ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THIS "RBCC STAR WARS SPECIAL" ARE AVAILABLE FOR $3.50 FROM THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

RBC CONTRIBUTORS

It's finally here! I can hardly believe it myself. This issue is my answer to all the STAR WARS rip-off mags. It is a respectful and imaginative treatment of the subject, instead of merely a typical one.

The front cover painting is by the artist who I feel is the star of the issue, RALPH FOWLER. Ralph also did the full pager of the Imperial Cruiser chasing down the Rebel Blockade Runner, not to mention the spectacular centerspread. STAR WARS may have Ralph McQuarrie, but the RBCC has RALPH FOWLER!

The back cover is by MORRIS SCOTT DOLLENS. He has been doing SF art for many years and has contributed to SFCA publications in the recent past. The RBCC will do an Artist Profile on him in the very near future.

STEVE FABIAN, an RBCC favorite, has more new pieces of art in this issue than in an single issue of RBCC before, and they aren't even used as covers.

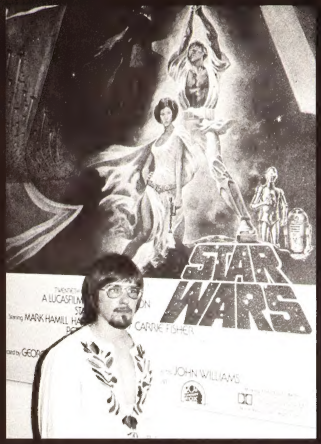
KERRY GAMMILL provides some of his finest art yet in a two page comic strip version of the cantina fight. It's done to illustrate observations in the article on the Marvel version of STAR WARS.

RON WILBER not only provides part two of his unique strip "TWILIGHT OF THE HEROES", but he also knocked himself out to get a STAR WARS parody to me in time for this issue.

R.C. HARVEY was asked by me to forego his regular column this issue and do a "Zero Hero" strip instead.

DON ROSA'S INFORMATION CENTER appears in a slightly shortened form this issue but has a really fine logo by HILARY BARTA which I think you'll like alot.

Other irregular contributors appear this issue as well such as JOHN ADKINS RICHARDSON, BRUCE PATTERSON, BRAD EPSTEIN, ANDY WARNER and MARC HEMPEL.



This issue also brought some new artists into the RBCC fold. MONICA MILLER (who will be doing art for ENTERPRISE INCIDENTS) did a fine Mark Hamill portrait piece. MATT FERTIG did the dynamic feature page illo. EDDY EDDINGS provided a drawing for MARK BURBEY's STAR WARS MUSIC article. JIM KUZEE provides a unique pencil illustration in THE STAR WARS COSMOS section written by MIKE KUNTZ.

"After The Closing Credits" by MICHAEL STEIN provided the springboard for the little cartoons which crop up and which are by HILARY BARTA and KEN MITCHRONEY with a spaceship by AL ZEQUEIRA and one by MIKE McKENNEY.

KEN MITCHRONEY also did the Darth Vader cartoon in the bibliography section.

There are also features by me, the editor, who appears above and in costume on the Editorial page.

That's twenty different artists contributing this issue.

IT'S AROUND HERE SOMEPLACE...

Every time I do a special issue I'm torn between looking forward to the next special issue and dreading it. Special issues are always enjoyable to read but the drain on my stamina is enormous, what with fretting over major features which fail to materialize even though the deadline has come and gone, long distance calls to be told all is well, and then making sure the printer carefully oversees the book itself so that a page doesn't come out wretchedly bad such as the Reed Crandall page in the last RBCC (which I'll try to run again soon). This issue saw me forced to make the decision of not running the second installment of the new PERTWILLABY PAPERS adventure by Don Rosa because it missed the deadline (at this writing I still haven't received it, although he just wrote and told me when it should arrive, and even that date has come and gone) and it just would have been impossible to add ten pages and hope it shows up in time. So it'll appear next issue.

If I hadn't already promised that this would be treated as a regular issue in already existing subscriptions, I would have marked it off as a double issue because it cost twice what I expected it would and four times the cost of a regular issue of RBCC. That slick paper is EXPENSIVE! Also, another reason for the high cost is that my printer just raised his price for doing the RBCC by 25%. That was a bit of a jolt although I should have expected it as it has been nearly four years since his last increase. For this reason various things have increased this issue, such as subscription rates, most ad rates, and wholesale rates. Plus I now charge 50¢ postage on an issue of the RBCC, which I didn't do before. My printer wants to raise my cost another 20% in a couple months but I think I can hold it off as he won't increase my price if it will be more than the business can reasonably accomodate, and that 25% will take a while to be adjusted to as it is. I HATE raising rates, almost as much as I hate it when others raise their rates on me. The interior color I wanted this issue went the way of other good ideas as well for with the other increases it would have added several hundred dollars more to my cost. So I settled for making sure the full color front and back covers were as spectacular as possible, as well as having more fine art in this issue of RBCC than I'd ever had before (and outdoing what has gone before isn't easy).

Ralph Fowler did his first color work ever for this issue's front cover, filling in for Mike Zeck who has just moved to Connecticut to more firmly establish his career as a comic book artist as he needed to be within easy traveling distance of New York City. He'll still be contributing to the RBCC, though, as next issue will have front and back covers by Mike Zeck.

NEXT ISSUE: Pertwillaby Papers part 2, "Twilight Of The Heroes" part 3, our other regular features return, articles on Capt. Atom and the art of Tim Kirk, as well as an introduction to George Beahm's new column/feature "The Bode' Dialogues" which features transcripts of hours of previously unpublished conversations with Vaughn Bode'. George is putting a lot of time and energy into editing this.

THE NEAR FUTURE: Features on "Young Frankenstein", "Dark Star", Roger Zelazny's Amber series, Harlan Ellison, another look at John Carter of Mars (with art by Ron Wilber, Tom Sutton and others), Brian DePalma

(the director of "Carrie", the soon to be released horror opus "The Fury" and other fine films), "Close Encounters Of The Third Kind" (which you can bet Ralph Fowler will find an interesting scene to illustrate) and much more.

I want to thank Ron Gomes of Toronto, Ontario for forwarding a copy of THE PRISONER PUZZLE to me. It is excellent and a must for Prisoner fans. Any of you other Canadian readers who can supply me with copies feel free to do so as I have other friends who would very much enjoy having one.

Special acknowledgements for this issue are extended to: MARK HAMILL (Thanks for the interview last year, and I'm sorry it made you miss lunch), CHARLES LIPPINCOTT (Thanks for answering important questions, providing needed aid, and for sending me that special advance publicity booklet back in May), and MIKE ZARRILLO (for lending me some nice stills from his collection). The other nice stills come from my collection.

There'll be no letter column this issue as the rest of this editorial will just discuss different things having to do with STAR WARS.

Although many articles have pointed out how many of the people involved with STAR WARS are comic fans, none have mentioned any previous direct involvement with fandom. I wouldn't know this myself but Mark Hamill mentioned to me his single involvement with a fanzine when I talked with him at the 1976 World SF Con. In the Spring, 1974 issue of SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS CREATED BY RAY HARRYHAUSEN (usually referred to as FXRH #4) there is an interview with Kerwin Mathews which was done by Mark Hamill and Anne Wyndham who had worked together on TV's "General Hospital" at the same time that Kerwin Mathews was appearing on it. I'm sure some of you have this zine in your collection and didn't recall that it had this interview. I know some of you have it as I sold a number of copies of it through the RBCC three years ago. FXRH was a really excellent fanzine. I wish I had the first three issues as well!

It's interesting to see all the magazines with STAR WARS features, especially the way they're handled. The cover of FAMOUS MONSTERS #139 shows a still on the left of Darth Vader and one on the right of C3PO at Mann's (formerly Grauman's, but everyone still calls it that) Chinese Theatre. Nothing in the magazine mentions the cover but the still of Darth Vader has Charles Lippincott standing on Vader's left and the still of C3PO has Gary Kurtz Kneeling down guiding the pole which 3PO is using to sign his name. The man on 3PO's right is one of the many effects technitions who works for Industrial Light & Magic and who worked on STAR WARS. I met him at the San Diego con but unfortunately I don't recall his name.

Another interesting mag to discuss is the July issue of AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER. This issue became a collector's item the week it was released and now commands five to ten dollars. It's worth it, besides the fact that it's extremely hard to find now. Oddly enough, back in September of 1976 AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER wasn't that interested in covering STAR WARS. At that time STAR WARS and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND were in a friendly race to see who would be released to the theatres first. Originally CLOSE ENCOUNTERS was set to be released Easter 1977 with STAR WARS a month later. STAR WARS came out on time but CLOSE ENCOUNTERS met with production delays. A year ago AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER was more interested in covering CLOSE ENCOUNTERS first and then maybe STAR WARS. That's because the people at A.C. are big Douglas Trumbull fans. But with the tigot lid on information about CLOSE ENCOUNTERS A.C. went with STAR WARS and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS obviously won't be covered until after the film is released.

This issue has an article by Mark Burbey on the music of STAR WARS. He discusses a lot of pieces I wasn't familiar with as possible inspirations for the music but he overlooks the most obvious. The film scores of Max Steiner and Erich Wolfgang Korngold for the Errol Flynn adventure films of the thirties and forties. A lot of this music is very similar in approach and feel to John Williams' STAR WARS. For some of the best music of this type try to find a copy of the recently released (about 2 years ago) RCA album CAPTAIN BLOOD: CLASSIC FILM SCORES FOR ERROL FLYNN. It shouldn't be hard to find in a good record store.

I'm sure some of you have noticed the on-screen bloopers in STAR WARS, but even then you may not have caught as many of them as we have. What we've noticed is the alien in Mos Eisley hitting his own very long nose when he directs the Storm Troopers to the docking bay where the Millenium Falcon is preparing to leave; A storm trooper on the far right of the screen bumping into the huge blast door when it opens on the room in the Death Star where R2D2 and C3PO are locked (in a closet) as part of a ruse; the strange editing in the scene where the Jawas sell Luke and his Uncle R2 & C3PO which puts the red and white robot back next to R2 in perfect shape in the background immediately following the scene where it blew up!; the space scenes where in you can briefly see through the eyepieces of Darth Vader and a TIE fighter pilot and see their faces (with the TIE pilot it's during the escape from the Death Star scene); the scene with Darth Vader and Moff Tarkin discussing Ben Kenobi when Vader has finished speaking but a few seconds later gestures as if to underscore something he isn't actually saying; and if you sit real close to the screen, during the last scene when Luke, Han and Chewie enter the temple to receive their awards, when it slows them enter from behind you can see cardboard people standing off to the left, but you have to be close and you have to pay attention; when the Millenium Falcon escapes from the Death Star Han Solo says, "We're coming up on their century ships" when what he obviously meant to say was sentry ships. I believe that would be Harrison Ford's fault. Of course there's the scene on the rebel ship when it has been boarded by Darth Vader and the Storm Troopers and we see R2 right after the princess has inserted the Death Star plans and R2 moves down the corridor toward 3PO and is heading right for the wall (this is true because the rest of that shot was shown on "The Making Of STAR WARS" and it showed R2 run right into the wall). On the desert of Tatooine when R2 and 3PO split up and 3PO turns away R2 is just standing there with his wheel spinning in the sand. Whether or not it could be termed a genuine blooper, when Luke is eating with his Aunt and Uncle and he reaches across the table, I could swear that he drags his large sleeve right through their gruel or what ever that stuff is. One fan columnist said that in the scene when Luke and Han return from the Death Star and they run across the hanger toward Princess Leia, you can hear Luke yell the name Carrie. This has been disproven by careful observation. If you want it to sound like he says Carrie it can, but when sitting in a theatre in such a position that each of three different speakers can be heard individually (and each has different sound coming from it as the Dolby system separates them) it is clear that he is yelling "Heeeyyy" and not "Carrie".

Speaking of "The Making Of STAR WARS" special (which I did briefly above), it was interesting how much of the special effects work they did show, especially the stop-motion, but it still wasn't as good as it could have been. With R2 & 3PO forever cutting up inbetween the interesting sections, it became at times just what those programs are accused of being. An overlong commercial.

Even though there have been a lot of articles on STAR WARS published, you generally see pretty much the same stills. This is because George Lucas does not want certain stills released yet. These include the creatures in the cantina and the jump to hyperspace, among others.

One criticism leveled against SW which I can't understand is racism. It's another Galaxy!! It's not our galaxy. Besides, the cantina represented more races than can even be described! Another galaxy is supposed to look different from Earth, not the same. It may interest some of you to know that they would like to use James Earl Jones in a sequel as more than Vader's voice.

FROM THE ADVENTURES OF LUKE SKYWALKER

BY JAMES VAN HISE

Six months before STAR WARS was released to theatres it had spawned a novelization, unlike most novelizations of films which are timed to appear when a film is released. But that wasn't the only difference this book had from other film tie-ins. It was written by the author and director of the film. This is not a first though as ZARDOZ was released as a novel written by the film's author and director John Boorman, although it was credited as having been co-authored by Bill Stair. Perhaps in this respect it is a little more honest that STAR WARS is, but more on that later.

As a novel, STAR WARS (subtitled "From The Adventures of Luke Skywalker") has all the adventure of the film and then some. Every scene that's in the film is in the book but we are also treated to some extra scenes which if left in the film (they were shot but discarded for reasons of pacing) would have added immensely to the overall enjoyment. These scenes involve one of the criticisms of the film I find valid. Characterization. They are all character scenes which when removed from the film simply cut the guts out of it, making it a film without a heart. A story of characters who are not people.

If one is unaware of the missing scenes and has never read the book, the film is more than acceptable as flashy entertainment in the tradition of comic books, Flash Gordon and John Carter of Mars, all of which are long on entertainment but short on characterizations. This is all well and good but if you are going to do something on that level, you shouldn't show people what they missed by not making it better. This is what the book does. In the novel we learn more about Luke and his friends (and Biggs is a name with a face and a fine fine scene instead of just a name tossed confusingly off by Luke early in the film when he complains about his situation to the robots). In the book Luke is shown to be even more of a typical teenager who is often mocked by his peers who really don't know any better.

This characterization also stretches into emotional development and involvement, especially in the attack on the Death Star by the X-Wing Fighters. Before the assault Luke is reunited with Biggs and also finds that the squadron leader knew Luke's father many years before. Luke has nowhere near the time he wants to talk to both before they leave on the attack run. When both of these men die in the assault on the Death Star, the loss he feels is deep and personal, especially with Biggs. In the film there's just a lot of people getting blown up in their spaceships and we really have little or no feeling about it. In the film they are not people who die, but merely characters. It is argued by those involved with the film that it is not meant to have this type of involvement, that it is just supposed to appeal to children on a level of adventure. This is all well and good except that even as a child the films and stories I respected most were those I could get involved with. The soap-opera super-heroes of Marvel lived for me when I was in my early teens and when at the age of 16 I saw the STAR TREK "City On The Edge Of Forever" I was moved. Some film-makers seem to think that children don't have any feelings and thus wouldn't be able to get involved with a film of that type. This is not to say that STAR WARS is totally bereft of emotional involvement but what there is occurs due to the music manipulating a scene and giving more depth than the actor is revealing on screen. This works to a degree but it would have been nicer if there were more.

The style of the book itself is reminiscent of the Heinlein juveniles. Why this segment of Heinlein's writing is called juveniles I'm not sure as it seems to denegrate the stories even though they are vastly better than the output of many supposedly serious writers.

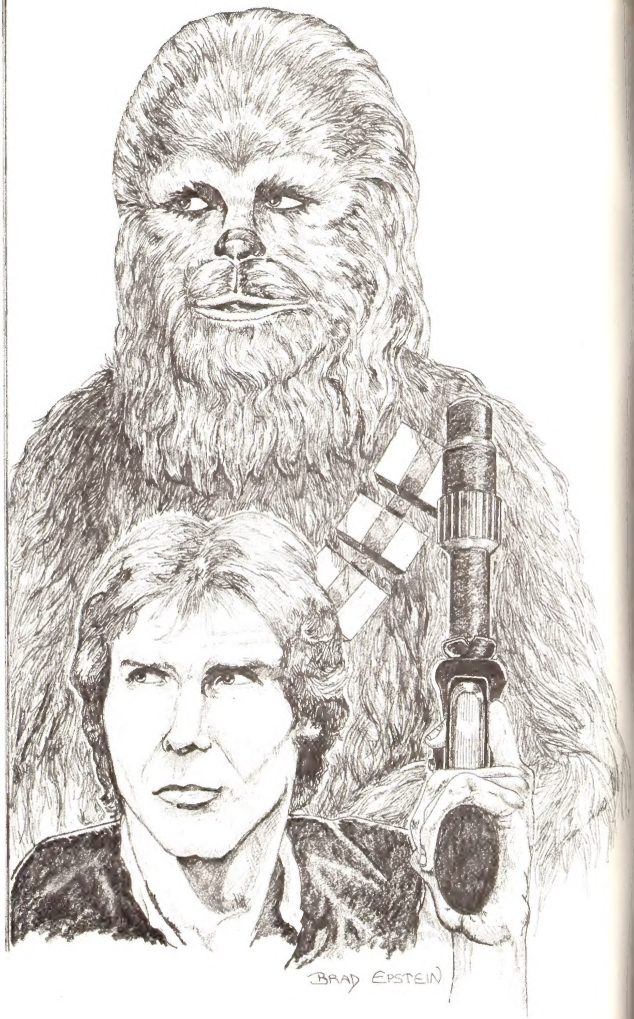
STAR WARS as a novel could have appeared in PLANET STORIES in the forties and been pretty much at home. All that's really missing is a stocky lead character for instant reader identification such as was required in SF pulp adventures of that time.

The book also brings more of the story's background in to focus. The film never mentions that the name of Luke's home planet is Tatooine, or that the Sand People are also called Tusken Raiders. It even gives a more complete explanation of the Force and makes it much more clear than the film did that when Ben Kenobi "died" that he went on to a higher plane of existence from which he could help Luke use The Force at the crucial moment even though Luke's previous experience with it had been limited.

There is one thing the film has which the book doesn't. The term Death Star. The novel itself only refers to it as the Battle Station. Come to think of it, even in the film the term Death Star is only used in the opening introduction and near the end in the voice-over at the rebel base when the Death Star's approach is being clocked. No character on screen actually says the word "Death Star". Perhaps this explains why this isn't corrected in the book as well as something about the background of the book itself, such as who really wrote it!

There is no question that the book is based on the screenplay written by George Lucas as well as on all his background and character notes. But did George Lucas actually write the complete novelization as it appears between the covers? Reasonable evidence seems to say no. Although the official party line of the Star Wars Corporation is that the novel is by George Lucas, other information contradicts this. Before the novel was released in December 1976, someone very close to the film offhandedly told me of a writer working on the novel for George when he was in England and how he would come in with a completed manuscript only to be told by George that he had changed some aspect of the story and the writer would have to do a rewrite. I tried talking to Charles Lippincott, head of publicity for STAR WARS, about the question of the novel's true author, and although he first stated that George wrote the book I began trying to pin him down by saying not just what I'd head (which he denied) but that I was aware that George wrote the script upon which the novel was based but did he actually adapt the script into the novel? At this point Lippincott seemed to become uncomfortable and said that he had said all he had to say on the subject. I had the feeling that he really didn't want to be pinned down so tightly that he had to tell a complete lie.

Although some have criticized the writing, one of the reasons I doubted its origin was because it just read too well to be someone's first novel. The backgrounds and descriptions were woven too nicely and easily to be from someone who hadn't done this many times before. At any rate, whoever wrote it, did an excellent job as this book is no quickly done rip-off.


BRAD EPSTEIN

STAR WARS MARVEL STYLE
WHERE IT WENT WRONG

BY JAMES VAN HISE

The title of this article may seem peculiar in light of the fact that the STAR WARS comic has fantastic sales and in fact has gone back to press on the first issue, not to mention the deluxe reprints of the first six issues into two volumes. But just because the comic is successful (which is a wild understatement) monetarily, doesn't mean that it is esthetically pleasing, because it isn't. If the STAR WARS comic hadn't been based on a successful film it would probably have folded before long. The comic is a success because the film is an even bigger success, not to mention the biggest phenomenon this side of STAR TREK.

Marvel lucked into the STAR WARS project as they picked it up just as they have picked up many other film to comic adaptations hoping one or more of them will prove to be more than just an average success. Stan Lee wasn't even interested in the project originally and he admits this. Roy Thomas recognized the potential of the series and pushed for it to be acquired. The artist Thomas chose was Chaykin (whom Stan Lee hadn't heard of before.)

At the 1976 San Diego Comic Art Convention the trio of Roy Thomas, Charles Lippincott and Howard Chaykin presented a slide show and question session on both the upcoming film and the comic. Chaykin expressed great enthusiasm for the project and the advance poster he had done of the characters seemed to indicate that he was going to do a really fine job. Seemed is right. But more on that later.

THE WRITING

To properly analyze the strength's and weaknesses of this comic book adaptation we must start with the writing.

Roy Thomas does a good job adapting the screenplay into a comic, as far as the story goes. He retains those character development scenes which were later discarded from the film before its release. These are important to the story as they add depth and interest. In a medium which depends on words as well as pictures to tell the story, this is necessary. What minor changes he made in pacing and dialogue cannot be faulted. He seems to have tried very hard to remain accurate not only to the spirit and ambience of STAR WARS, but also to the universe created by George Lucas.

Although I haven't always been enthusiastic about the adaptations done by Roy Thomas (his direct adaptations of Conan stories by Howard have usually been good, although his own original Conan tales leave a great deal to be desired), in this case he has succeeded. But there may be a reason for this. Star Wars Corporation, in the person of Charles Lippincott, has strict control over what Marvel does with the STAR WARS comic. Thus although Roy Thomas is the editor, he has to answer to Star Wars Corporation over what they can and can't do with the comic. This is why the letter columns will frequently mention consultations held with George Lucas and others over directions taken in the comic.

At the 1976 World Science Fiction Convention in Kansas City, Charles Lippincott mentioned the planned Marvel comic and stated that it would not be "A GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD - George Tuska rip-off", referring to the poorly done Marvel adaptation of that fantasy film. He may have succeeded in preventing Marvel from butchering the story, but there is another equally important area he didn't succeed in.

THE ARTWORK

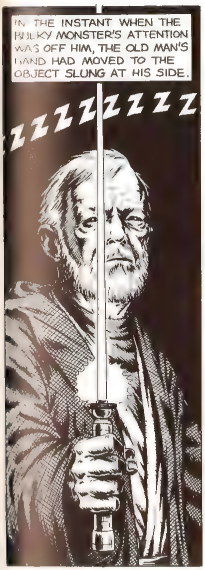
From the beginning, Howard Chaykin expressed extreme interest in the STAR WARS comic book project. In San Diego he spoke in excited terms of the duel in the cantina. Why then when he drew it did he pick, virtually without exception, all the most uninteresting angles to portray it in a composition which made the scene come across as incidental instead of as one of the most talked about sequences in the film? As disapponting as the artwork on the comic has been, this was one of the real lows. I was so frustrated by how badly this was done that I asked Kerry Gammill to redraw this scene to show how interesting it should have been. Kerry's version draws from the novelization version of this scene as well as the film. About the only thing in it which perhaps couldn't have been done by Marvel is the portrayal of the graphic violence exhibited in this scene. Even in the film it was toned down considerably to quick cuts and inferences. This version is more for the fans of the novel's portrayal as well as to show how it could have been more interesting from other angles. (Even if you ignore the different aliens, the establishing scenes in the cantina and the composition of the pages themselves is far superior to what Chaykin did). I've yet to find one person who has consistently enjoyed the art in the STAR WARS comic. One person who saw Ron Wilber's original's for his satire in this issue said that he wished Marvel's comic had artwork that was at least half that good.

Although part of the problem certainly lies with Howard Chaykin, the blame is not completely his. The inking of his art has been very dull and often crude. Chaykin's own inking of his pencils on issue one had been the worst until #7 came along. People often extole the virtues of composition while ignoring sloppy linework. I cannot do this as one is as important as the other. Until #6 came along I couldn't appreciate Chaykin's art on this strip in any respect except perhaps his spaceships and the jump to hyper-space in #2. STAR WARS #6 shows whats wrong with all the rest of them as it is a superb issue. The inking by Rick Hoberg and Bill Wray is tight, smooth and imaginative. The only issue thus so far. But another and equally important strong point is the coloration which compliments the artwork with perfect choices panel for panel. With #7 the coloration is dull and boring again, and the inking is even worse. Issue #6 showed how beautiful this comic can look when given a decent chance.

THE COVERS

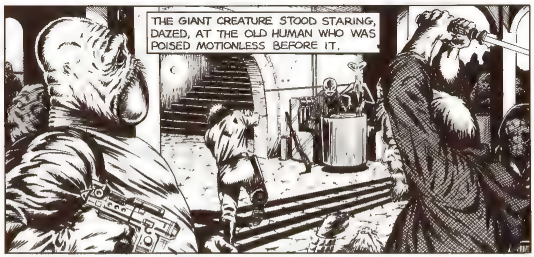
Although this could have been covered under the art section I want to discuss these separately for one reason. Truth in advertising. The covers of STAR WARS #2, 5 and 6 show scenes portrayed as being in the story (as opposed to a montage or a symbolic representation such as #1 and #4) and they are blatant lies! Sheer ridiculous misrepresentation, and it's done consciously! This does not do justice either to STAR WARS or to Marvel comics. Where was Star Wars Corporation when these adsurdities were concocted? Especially #2! It would be nice to see S.W. Corporation exert the artistic control the comic needs!

LUKE SAT AND SIPPED HIS DRINK IN SPLENDID SILENCE, HIS EYES ROVING OVER THE CROWD IN HOPES OF MEETING A RESPONSIVE GAZE THAT HELD NO BELLIGERENCE.
NEGOLA DEWAGHI WOOLDUGGER?!
WHOP!
HE DOESN'T LIKE YOU. I DON'T LIKE YOU, EITHER.
SORRY? ARE YOU INSULTING US? YOU JUST BETTER WATCH YOURSELF! WE'RE ALL WANTED!
I'LL BE CAREFUL, THEN.
I'M SORRY...
YOU'LL BE **DEAD!**
THIS LITTLE ONE ISN'T WORTH THE TROUBLE. COME, LET ME BUY YOU ALL SOMETHING.
NEGOLA DEWAGHI WOOLDUGGER!!
FWAP!
CLICK

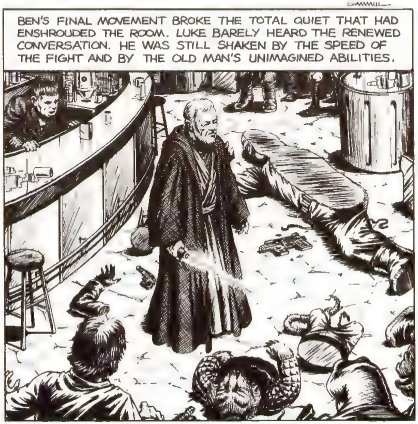

IN THE INSTANT WHEN THE HULKY MONSTER'S ATTENTION WAS OFF HIM, THE OLD MAN'S HAND HAD MOVED TO THE OBJECT SLUNG AT HIS SIDE.
zzzzzzzzz

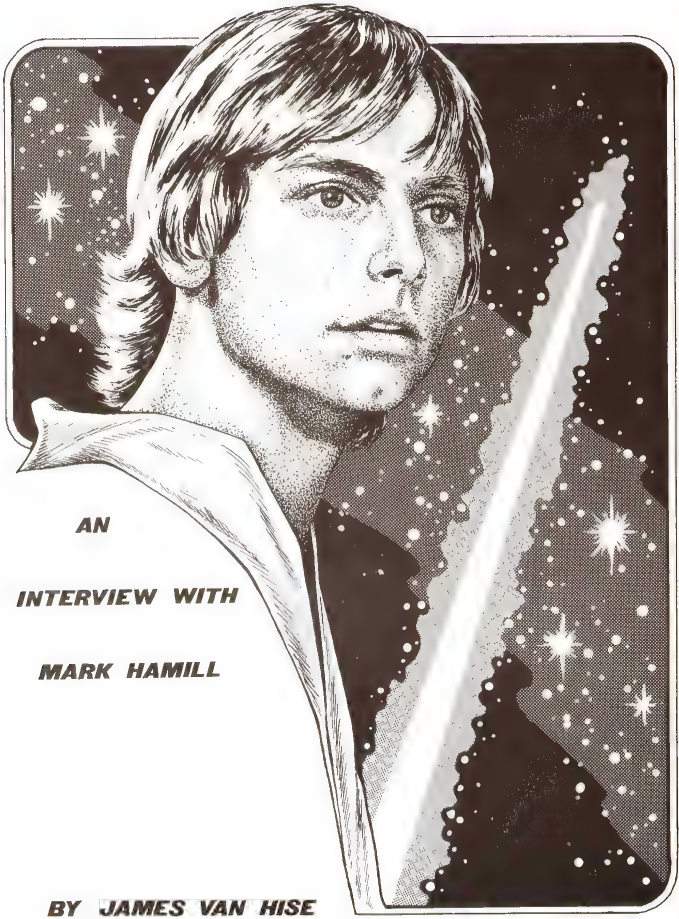
FWZZT!

ZZZIIK!


THE GIANT CREATURE STOOD STARING, DAZED, AT THE OLD HUMAN WHO WAS POISED MOTIONLESS BEFORE IT.

KZZZP!


BEN'S FINAL MOVEMENT BROKE THE TOTAL QUIET THAT HAD ENSHROUDED THE ROOM. LUKE BARELY HEARD THE RENEWED CONVERSATION. HE WAS STILL SHAKEN BY THE SPEED OF THE FIGHT AND BY THE OLD MAN'S UNIMAGINED ABILITIES.


AN
INTERVIEW WITH
MARK HAMILL
BY JAMES VAN HISE
©MILLER '87 FH

[INTRODUCTION] THIS INTERVIEW WAS DONE WITH MARK HAMILL IN SEPTEMBER 1976 AT THE WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION IN KANSAS CITY. THE GENERAL PUBLIC KNEW LITTLE ABOUT STAR WARS AT THIS TIME AND IN FACT THE FILM WAS ONLY ABOUT HALF FINISHED WITH THE RELEASE DATE NINE MONTHS AWAY. RICK BAKER HADN'T EVEN BEEN CALLED IN YET, WHICH IS WHY MARK DOESN'T MENTION HIS CONTRIBUTION WHEN DISCUSSING MAKE-UP, ETC. NO ONE REALLY KNEW WHAT STAR WARS WOULD FINALLY LOOK LIKE, MUCH LESS THAT IT WOULD SOAR TO UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS. THUS HIS COMMENTS CONTAIN CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM ABOUT THE FILM. ASIDE FROM A LOT OF THE INTERESTING INFORMATION THIS INTERVIEW CONTAINS, IT SHOWS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE IN THE MIDDLE OF A MAMMOTH PRODUCTION WHOSE RELEASE IS MONTHS AND MONTHS AWAY WITH A FUTURE WHERE ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN...AND IT DID!

* * * * * * * * *

HOW OLD ARE YOU AND HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN FILMS?

I started in the summer of 1969. I got an agent about Christmas time after doing an original play called "Anthems in E Flat Calliope" at a theatre in Hollywood. I got an agent and it took me about a year from the summer I arrived before I started working in television. I think the first thing I did was THE BILL COSBY SHOW. Since then I've done 51 episodes of a soap opera, GENERAL HOSPITAL. It's great training, great training; really not the king of material you're really proud of, but it's a great acting exercise. I also did a series called THE TEXAS WHEELERS which was very, very highly critically acclaimed, and I was so damn proud! It was a comedy, without a laugh track, about a real family, like a WALTONS who fought with each other, skipped school, hated work, and their father was a drunk. It was really real! It came from the Mary Tyler Moore people. We made 13, we went off in 4, but that's just television biz for ya'.

STAR WARS is my first feature film, but I've done four television movies, and three of them I think were really good. One of them was SARA T., PORTRAIT OF A TEENAGE ALCOHOLIC, in which I played Linda Blair's boyfriend. We did sort of a BORN INNOCENT in reverse, where an innocent kid went into prison and was in with all the strange elements that are in prison called MALLORY, CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE with Raymond Burr. I played a real life character, a kid with hyperkenesis, a kind of a sick kid who wound up on top of towers sniping at people below in a movie called DELANCY STREET. The last one I did I played Patricia Neal's and Claude Akins' son in ERIC, which was a HALLMARK HALL OF FAME about a kid dying of leukemia. I played Eric's younger brother.

I first went out for STAR WARS in November, 1975. I met Brian DePalma and George. They were having joint interviews. Brian was doing a horror film called CARRIE. I don't think George said a word through the whole interview; he's real shy, he let Brian do the talking. He didn't tell me anything about STAR WARS. Everybody from about 15 to 30 was out, and they were looking for Luke, yet I didn't know that; they didn't tell me anything about it! We knew it was called STAR WARS, so it had to be something to do with outer space, and we knew it was George Lucas.

THEY WOULDN'T LET YOU SEE A SCRIPT?

No! Nobody saw a script until later when I did a screen test, then they sent me four pages, maybe 5 pages of scenes, and no character description really, so I just had to pretty much play it in neutral, play it the way I would react in that situation, which worked out fine, because Luke is a simple farmboy, which is not to say that I am. I think I'm far from it! It's funny because when I finally tested for it, I tested with Harrison. Harrison had tested with a few other people, and maybe George was leaning toward them, I didn't know, but Harrison had worked with George before in AMERICAN GRAFFITI, so he knew George. I was really nervous. This was a screen test with George Lucas and I was all "Yes, sir," and Harrison was all "Aw, shit, George, let's get this fuckin' thing over with and let's get the hell outa here!" I was really shocked that he was talking to George that way, you know what I mean? I understand it now because George is one of the nicest men I've ever met, just an incredible man, and I can't describe him, he's so unique. He doesn't even like being talked about he's so shy. He'd never come to one of these conventions. He loves this one restaurant in San Francisco and he won't go there because people know him now. He hates it. He will never go to the Academy Awards again. He only went once because of AMERICAN GRAFFITTI, and Universal made him go. He's like the antithesis of what you think a Hollywood director would be like. I really think the man is brilliant, and he has such an instinct, such a natural.....I trusted him totally. Choices I never would have made as an actor, I did for him because I know he must be right. I never put up an argument, really. Usually if I can't do something the way that director tells me, something has got to be worked out or I can't do it. We somehow have to reach a compromise before I'll be able to do what he wants me to. It would have to be at least shaded my way. But I was doing things that I felt were dead wrong in this movie, dead wrong, and I just trusted George that it'll come out all right.

YES, YOU MENTIONED EARLIER ABOUT THE SCENE INVOLVING THE DEATH OF YOUR AUNT AND UNCLE IN THE FILM, IN WHICH YOU WANTED TO FALL TO YOUR KNEES AND WEEP, BUT GEORGE WANTED THE AUDIENCE TO PROJECT IT'S OWN FEELINGS INTO THAT SCENE, RATHER THAN YOURS SPECIFICALLY.

Yes, exactly.

Marcia Lucas, George's wife, is very open. She edited TAXI DRIVER and ALICE DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANY MORE, and is just the opposite, very open and.....

OPPOSITES ATTRACT.

Exactly. Isn't that the truth? She's terrific. I mean she was so much fun in Africa. She'd come out and sunbathe and act astonished, really funny. Not that George isn't. He has a great sense of humor, but he's very shy and he won't offer things, whereas she will. She likes to talk; she likes to dance. She told me I was right to trust George because he is an instinctive director, and really in to things like this. In a thing like STAR WARS, you have no choice but to trust him because if you're looking at a piece of tape and they're going to put something in later, you have to trust that you're reacting to something that isn't there, and you pray to God that when they put it in that it matches up with the way you're reacting. All of cinema, all of television is a composite art. I mean everybody knows how important those people you don't see are more than me, as one of the people who are in front of the camera; but especially on STAR WARS. It was just the greatest experience of my life. The art directors, the paintings, the going up and seeing the office in England littered with EERIE magazines that had robots in them. They had books that I've never seen on androids in the cinema. The art director I think is fantastic in the film; the look of the costumes and everything. You have my world, Tatooine, which is a desert planet; arid, rocky in parts, and you can cut from that white, dry world to the cold metallic world of the Death Star. I have that tunic; you've seen the tunic, that Samurai type tunic. You throw my poncho over it and immediately it switches from oriental to a western or Spanish look. For awhile they were trying to get me a huge brimmed hat, I mean it was gigantic, turned up like maybe I'd wear it in the sun. Fortunately they decided against it because it looked so damned silly!

STAR WARS is a space fantasy, a space opera. It begins with the rebel forces being overtaken in outer space. They want to find the hidden tapes which are relevant to a new weapon they built called The Death Star. With those tapes it shows the weaknesses, the only way that we could probably penetrate it. On board are Threepio and Artoo not knowing that he's been programmed with this hologram of the princess. His pro-

grams are to seek out Sir Alec Guinness who was once a member of the government which was in power just before the Galactic Empire; the previous having been a benevolent government. When I follow Artoo and meet up with Guinness, I find out that my father was also associated with Guinness, even though I never knew that he was an officer in the government. He presents a laser sword to me that my father wanted me to have, and he wants me to come with him to Alderaan and learn to be a Jedi Knight, to learn the force, the mental process of fighting.

I HEARN YOU HAD SOME PROBLEMS DURING THE DESERT SHOOTING.

In one part we had 9 robots all at the same time, plus the Jawas, the little sand people whose faces you couldn't see. A lot of them were little Tunisian children, a couple of Tunisian dwarfs, a couple of our dwarfs, and you'd have eleven of those guys and 9 robots, and they were loading robots down, and it was all chaos because dwarfs were bumping into radio controlled robots, tipping over, you could see their legs inside. It was amazing! Total chaos.

YOU MENTIONED A SCENE WHERE YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO REACH FOR ONE OF THE BLASTERS, WHIP IT UP AND START SHOOTING.

Yes, they had a row which were mostly lightweight dummies, but one real one which had the realistic weight to it. They switched them once, and I reached down to grab it up and almost pulled my arm out of joint. And George said, "I don't want you just whipping it up. It's a heavy gun." So it wasn't just a joke. He wanted me to grab the heavy one each time because he wanted this gun to look really real, he wanted them to look like heavy artillery, which is why the prop people built those out of British sub-machine guns. And when we were wearing the Storm Tropper uniforms, you couldn't sit down. They put us in piece by piece, and they built us some saw horses to sit on and that's the most we could rest all day. It was terrible. Plus you get panicky inside those helmets because it's not like any mask at all which is fitted up against your face. You can see the inside of the helmet and it's all sickly green, plus you've got wax in your ears because of the explosions, and you just feel eerie because with the helmet on you feel that you're in your own little thing because nobody's talking to you. I only once freaked out and said, "Get me outa' here!", you know. It really was uncomfortable.

SINCE THE LASER SWORDS (NOTE: THIS IS WHAT EVERYONE WAS REFERRING TO THEM AS THEN, RATHER THAN AS THE LIGHT SABERS WHICH THEY ARE CALLED IN THE FILM) ARE PRIMARILY SPECIAL EFFECTS AFTER THE FACT, HOW DID YOU SIMULATE THE FIGHT WITH THE SWORD WHEN THERE WAS NO BLADE?

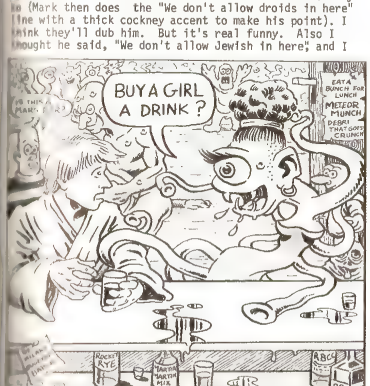
Well there were some built by the prop people that did have blades and were photographed specially through a certain kind of glass so that when you look through the lens they glowed and they spun around on the handle. I don't know if I'm supposed to be telling all this. I mean I guess maybe everybody will be able to figure things out, they're so advanced, but I hate when they say, "How did your hovercraft work?", it's part of the magic. Part of the magic is not knowing; but maybe it's just a futile sort of hope of mine because I still remember the first time I saw KING KONG or JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS when I was a kid and just believed it! In a way when you grow up it's disappointing to find out how it is all done, but then again.....

A LOT OF THE FANS ARE JUST AMAZED BY THE SPECIAL EFFECTS THEMSELVES AND JUST THE FACT THAT IT COULD BE DONE AT ALL.

There's one time when I put on a helmet with a blast shield down so I can't see and a small little sputnik will like race to my head, and with the Force Guinness is teaching me to block this thing. It emits a little red beam, painful but not deadly, and it'll zap you in the butt or whatever. Once we did that with the real laser sword which was on the handle, and one time we did it without the blade. They wanted the thing to be able to shoot and then back off and so really, the way they do things in the movies is always the easiest. You always think of the most complicated ways they could have done it. You know what they were doing? John Stears, the special effects man, was up on a ladder with a fishing pole with this plastic sputnik on the end, but he couldn't get it to dart, so what they did was they had me do it and imagine it was there. It was much like Kerwin Mathews seeing the skeleton that wasn't there in SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD. I had to watch it with my eyes and then do stuff, which is really hard because I know a couple of times.....I was real limited. They would say, Don't do too much over here or there, don't look low, yeah that looks good looking through the lens. You have to believe it yourself or you're going to blow it because everybody's looking at you like let's see how this guy looks at something that's not there. So I'm doing that and he wanted to dart a lot, but a couple times it really cracked me up because the only thing is James, a couple of times while I was shooting it I thought, "Oh, that looked good," because it's hard to see it, and a couple of times it looked bad, but I could tell when I was doing it right. A couple of times when I gave him a piece that he could use I thought to myself "That looked good," and immediately you're out of it and you have to get back. That was interesting to say the least.

THE SPECIAL EFFECTS ARE BEING DONE OUT IN CALIFORNIA?

Yeah, everything else was done in England with an English crew. The only Americans were George Lucas, Gary Kurtz, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fischer and myself. All the rest of the cast was British or Canadian, Canadians living over there who had sort of American accents and I don't know how they're going to explain British accents, but it's another galaxy, so I guess people won't know. The bartender in the Cantina has a cockney accent (Mark then does the "We don't allow droids in here" line with a thick cockney accent to make his point). I think they'll dub him. But it's real funny. Also I thought he said, "We don't allow Jewish in here," and I



BELOW: MARK HAMILL AND YE EDITOR AT THE 1976 WORLD S.F. CON IN KANSAS CITY WHERE THIS INTERVIEW WAS DONE.

got very nervous.

The director of photography is Gil Taylor who just did THE OMEN and who also did A HARD DAY'S NIGHT, REPULSION, a lot of the Roman Polanski films. Really terrific. I knew who he was immediately, and he was surprised, but I have a lot of friends who are film students at USC and they've really educated me so far as directors of photography and so forth. Stuart Freeborn did all the masks. He did the "2001" apes, he did Chewbacca.

DID HE HAVE TO GO THROUGH A BIG PROCESS TO HAVE THAT SUIT PUT ON?

Not really; nothing compared to Threepio. Basically it just goes on and is snapped together and the hair is just combed all over it. It's pretty easy. The suit is separate from the head. He's not wearing lifts. Peter Meyhew played the part and he also played the Minataur in SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER. He's just the most gentle.....That's how smart George is; I mean he found this big gangling sweet guy. He was so shy at first and everything, couldn't believe it, he just loved being in the movie, but he has a real deep laugh from here (he taps on his chest), I can't do it. A terrific guy. He went right back to the hospital afterwards and he's an intern again. He'd like to act, but.....it's funny because there's a lot of people over 7'3" in the Screen Actors Guild in America, believe it or not, there are, but in England there aren't. They had to just find somebody. For some reason they wanted to cast as few people as possible in the States. And they looked everywhere, they looked for all of our characters in England, New York and here. I'm not saying over hundreds and hundreds of people that I got the part; because there are terrific actors that would have been just as good, but there was just something about me that he liked for the character. That's always just a joke when people say, "After 400,000 interviews he gets the part." I was just lucky.

WHAT OTHER ACTORS TRIED OUT FOR THE ROLE, AND WHO WAS HE THINKING ABOUT BEFORE HE CHOSE YOU, OR DID YOU EVER FIND OUT?

Oh, yeah. Later he told me he was 80% sure he wanted Luke Skywalker to be this other actor, and I don't want to say his name because I haven't even told him. He's my friend! Tremendous actor. Real nice guy, funny, curly hair. Shorter than me, but I tested, and for some reason he liked me. I just got in by the skin of my nose because he was 80% sure on this other guy, and he was leaving real soon for England, George was, in fact I got him my screen test the very last day before he left. Is that getting a part by just a hair? I mean what fate.

I mean, he kinda' didn't want to see me any more because he liked this other guy so much, but my agent would say, "C'mon, what's it gonna hurt, you know? You just shoot 5 minutes of film and forget it." So I was really lucky.

I was telling you about people like John Stears, who won an Oscar for THUNDERBALL and who did all the on-the-set special effects. All the minatures and process work will be done in America; that's the only part of the production being done here.

WHAT STUDIO IS DOING THE SPECIAL EFFECTS?

It's not a studio. It's a bunch of guys. John Dykstra, who's head of Industrial Light and Magic, ILM, they're all - that's what I'm so happy to tell ya', Jim, they're all real fans, like you and me. They all love it. Like I told you, I went to Universal one time and I was such a fan of this one make-up artist, whom I won't name, and I went up to his studio because I was in the make-up department for something I was doing there, and so I went in, and I was just in awe, my eyes taking in everything and he turned around, and most of these guys are just old crotchety guys who don't give a darn about what they're doing, it's a job. He turns and sayd, "May I help you?" and I say, "Hello, I'm just a great fan of yours, and I won't say anything and I'll just stand right here.", and I got kicked out! But these guys at ILM love E.C.'s and love comic books. They had this big costume party while we were gone and they had Darth Vader costumes, Darth Vader looked better than the one we had in the movie, I mean he had really red eyes and he looked fantastic! And a guy came as me, a guy came as Chewie, I mean they're really into it. They're all young, they're all freaks with long pony tails and they love their work, and they love science fiction, so that's really nice.

WILL GEORGE LUCAS WRITE ANY OF THE SEQUELS?

For awhile I thought he had written all the sequels, or at least sketched them out in his head, but just recently I heard that he was asking someone to just write a script about what happens after this one. So maybe he has his own and maybe he's seeing if other people have better ideas.

This thing is open ended. We're committed to two more, Carrie and I, Harrison and I. They hope to make it sort of like a James Bond thing. George wouldn't direct. He wants to give young directors that really have promise the break.

DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG GEORGE HIMSELF HAD THE IDEA FOR STAR WARS?

He wanted to make this before AMERICAN GRAFITTI. STAR WARS, he told me, generated from the sequel to THX-1138. The part I play is Robert Duvall, but it evolved a different way. At one time Luke Skywalker was a girl and the princess was her brother that she was rescuing. Gary Kurtz told me a couple days ago that for a couple days he wanted Luke to be played by a midget, and my aunt and uncle would be midgets so that when he goes to another world, they're all giants. At one time he wanted to make us all Japanese actors. So its gone through a lot of changes. He's been working on it...it'll be three years in preparation where he worked every day. John Stears and all of them thought there wasn't enough preparation, that it could have been so much better if they hadn't rushed into it. Three years was all preparation, but it wasn't three years for them. It was more like a couple of months for them to get all these things that were impossible to work. That's why if there's a sequel, and I hope there is, Stears can't wait to do it. He says that'll be two years and that'll be just enough time to really do it good.

ARTOO DETOO AND TOTO TOO

DARTH VADER, THE FACE BEHIND THE MASK!

BY JAMES VAN HISE

Of all the characters in STAR WARS, the one most immediately identifiable with the film is Darth Vader. This towering, mysterious being garbed in black captures the power and the essence of STAR WARS. We know a few things about Darth Vader, but really not very much. We know more about most any other character in the film than we do about Darth Vader. There is a sense of wonder about him. He is the villain yet he is probably the most popular character in STAR WARS. With his cape, helmet, body armor, etc, he is very colorful even if he is virtually all black. The garb fits the character.

The still above is a behind-the-scenes shot of one of the very memorable scenes of the film. What makes it especially unique is that we see Darth Vader without his mask in the form of actor David Prowse, who played Darth Vader in the film (a different actor plays Darth Vader on TV shows, etc). This, of course, is not how Darth Vader is actually supposed to look under his mask. but more on that later.

David Prowse has appeared in previous films such as A CLOCKWORK ORANGE (he played the weightlifter) and in FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL (he played the monster under a lot of makeup). He spoke in a very strong Scottish brogue which is why the voice of James Earl Jones was later used for Vader's voice.

But what do we know about Darth Vader? From the film very little, but from George Lucas we learn a lot more.

In STAR WARS we learn that Darth Vader is a Lord of

Sith, a Dark Lord (obviously). We can assume that the Sith are a people or perhaps it's a country or a planet. It is never made clear. The outfit that Vader wears, although striking and effective is not for mere show. There is a story behind it.

In one of the screenplays Lucas wrote for STAR WARS, he included the origin of Darth Vader. I'll get to this in a moment.

In STAR WARS we learn that the destiny of Luke Skywalker had become linked to that of Darth Vader many years before. Darth Vader had been a pupil of Obi-Wan Kenobi twenty years before. Vader had become seduced by the dark side (or evil side) of the Force. Vader had been a young Jedi Knight along with Obi-Wan and Luke's father. Seeing advantages for himself with the Empire, Darth Vader threw in with them and betrayed the Jedi Knights. Vader also murdered Luke's father. Ben Kenobi escapes whatever traps had been set for him and he tracks down and confronts Darth Vader. Their confrontation is just like the one they would repeat on the Death Star twenty years later. Only Vader does not yet require a mask. In this first confrontation Ben nearly kills Vader as Darth falls into a volcanic pit. Vader's body is horribly burned and mutilated. He escapes death but at a price. In a way Vader's outfit is much like that of Dr. Doom's. But Vader's injuries go far beyond mutilation as the suit and mask he wears are like an enormous iron lung. This is why we hear the heavy mechanical breathing coming from him in some scenes.

One of the early concepts of Darth Vader had him being from another Galaxy and requiring a life-support suit due to his breathing a different kind of atmosphere, or so said Charles Lippincott at the 1976 World S.F. Con. It was at this convention that I saw Darth Vader sort of in person as they had the original design mock-up of his costume on a manikin. It was quite impressive.

Originally Darth Vader was created as the main heavy in STAR WARS, and although he still pretty much retains this position in the film he is answerable to Moff Tarkin. We have the feeling, though, that he is answerable to Tarkin only because he chooses to be (and the novel confirms this). Vader has his own plans which Tarkin happens to fit into...for the present.

Actually, the character of Tarkin was created by George Lucas when he arrived in England for filming and found that Peter Cushing would be available for a role in STAR WARS. Like many others, Lucas had admired Cushing's work for a long time. Few actors have the screen presence of Peter Cushing and it is hoped that his role in STAR WARS will succeed in bringing him other equally major film roles.

One of the surprising things about STAR WARS is that Luke Skywalker (the main character if we decide to be pinned down to making that distinction) never meets Darth Vader face to face. Vader is actually seen by Luke once from a distance when he sees Darth Vader destroy Ben Kenobi just outside the hanger containing the Millennium Falcon on the Death Star. Luke himself is threatened by Darth Vader's ship in the trench although the pilot's identity is unknown to him. He is unaware that the ship that nearly destroys him contains the man who killed his father!

One can assume, I feel, that since STAR WARS is conceived of as a series of films, that in the final film Luke will face and fight Darth Vader to the death (aided by the disembodied Ben Kenobi).

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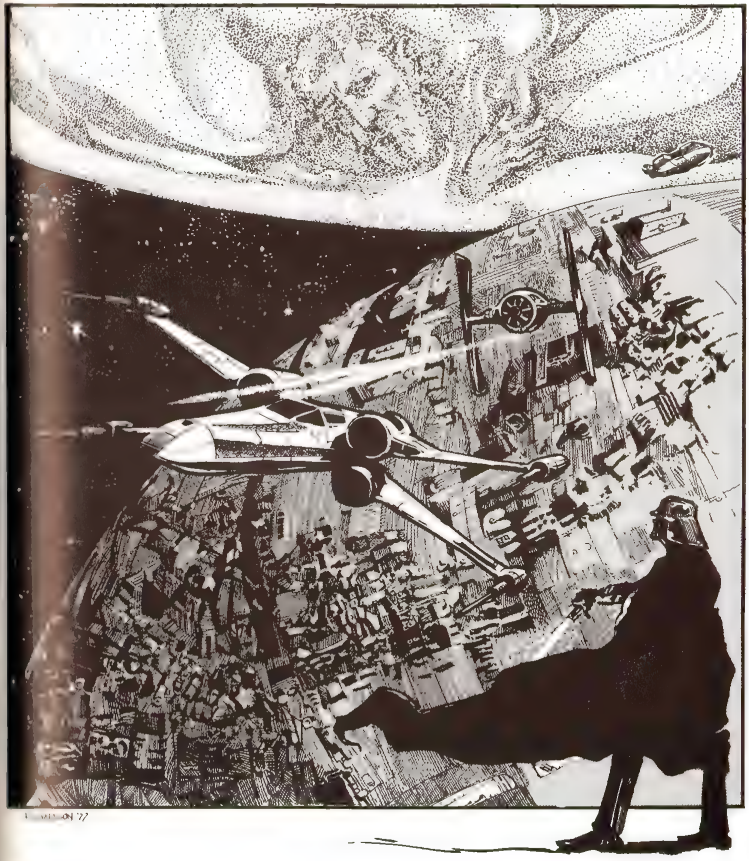
STAR WARS
Released by 20th Century-Fox

SW-K-16 **Peter Cushing** is Grand Moff Tarkin, Governor of the Imperial Outland regions and commander of the frighteningly powerful new battle station, the Death Star.

ONE WITH THE FORCE...FORCEVER



MARC HAMPEL ©1977

THE MUSIC OF STAR WARS

BY MARK BURBEY

As big a phenomenon as the film STAR WARS is to the movie industry, the incredible specially-tailored music by John Williams is just as important a work within the world of film music.

Further, the music is part of what makes the movie work. From the beginning, it excites the senses, puting the viewer into the proper mood to fully appreciate the overwhelming atmosphere of an epic adventure. It also provides much of the heartfelt emotional content to scenes where director George Lucas didn't allow his actors to really let go.

For soundtrack collectors, the double-record set is pretty much a dream come true. There are other double-record film scores on the market, such as the delightful NEW YORK, NEW YORK and the dreadful TOMMY albums, but none to my knowledge that feature four entire sides of background and incidental music.

John Williams, the genius who composed the music for STAR WARS is very well known among music aficionados. His most recent scores have been for BLACK SUNDAY, JAWS and THE MISSOURI BREAKS, and before that came such films as THE TOWERING INFERNO, EARTHQUAKE and THE EIGER SANCTION among others.

Williams first learned of the STAR WARS project when Steven Spielberg (who was completing JAWS at the time) introduced him to George Lucas. Interestingly enough, the first piece of music Lucas and Williams discussed was that involving the cantina band at Mos Eisley.

Near the beginning, Lucas had the idea of possibly using traditional classical pieces of music throughout the film, but fortunately this was not done. Had they done this, I believe it would have hindered the flow of the story considerably. First, anyone in the audience who was familiar with classical music would take his mind off the film momentarily to think, "Oh, that's a piece by Dvorak." (Parts of the Gustav Holst masterpiece THE PLANETS were used in the terrible THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH, and it didn't sound like film music, but just like some classic music stuck into the film.) And secondly, John Williams made a good point and said, even though this technique worked well in 2001, "...it doesn't take a piece of melodic material, develop it and relate it to a character all the way through the film."

The music for STAR WARS is unique in several ways. The orchestra John Williams had the good fortune to work with was The London Symphony Orchestra. Working with a full sized orchestra is quite often a rarity in the soundtrack business, and normally the scores are played by a group of musicians much smaller than a true orchestra. But since they were working in England, Williams had four orchestras to choose from, and he chose The London Symphony Orchestra because he was friends with the orchestra's regular conductor, Andre Previn. If one were to compare the music, say, for JAWS to that from STAR WARS, the difference in tonal depth and the richness provided the music by a large orchestra would be immediately obvious. It's a shame that it's not always feasible for a large orchestra to record a film's music, because The London Symphony Orchestra's glorious brass and incredible string sections demonstrate what a marvelous difference can be made merely by increasing the number of instruments.

The music has other distinctions.

Whenever a certain piece of music is repeated in the film, it is arranged and played in a way that makes it sound different than it did the time before.

As opposed to other great soundtracks, such as those by Bernard Herrmann which are often somber and moody, the STAR WARS music is almost constantly at a peak energy level, and even when it's not, the melodies are always very clear and characteristic of what is happening in the film. After seeing STAR WARS seven times and playing the record innumerable times, many parts of the movie pop into my head the moment I hear a certain passage of the music, such as the scene where C-3PO and R2-D2 blast away from the Imperial ship in an escape pod, Ben's death and Luke screaming "NO!", the scene with Luke and Han posing as stormtroopers with Chewbacca as their "prisoner", and the ultimate destruction of the Death Star.

The music, because of its clarity and distinct melodies, is highly listenable when heard apart from the film. Even the most classic of film scores have passa-

ges made up of banging drums, screaming violins, and belching tubas forcing out their uttermost lowest notes that might have sounded great in the movie when they accented a certain scene, but when played alone are not at all pleasing to the ear. The STAR WARS music, on the other hand, is a fulfilling and immensely enjoyable listening experience from beginning to end. Each selection is either exciting, soothing, sad, pretty, or moody, but never brash or offensive.

In listening to the STAR WARS soundtrack, some of the music reminds me of other works I've heard. Not that Williams plagiarized, of course, but due to the clashing horns and flutes and the use of tuned logs, steel plates and slap sticks, the music for the scene where Luke is attacked by one of the sandpeople is reminiscent of some of the Jerry Goldsmith scores, particularly PLANET OF THE APES. Some of the moodier passages, however so slightly, smack vaguely of Bernard Herrmann, and some of the more adventurous swashbuckling passages sound a little like Herrmann's Sinbad and Jason scores at times. The music heard in the desert scenes and in the sequence where R2-D2 is captured by the Jawas is very much like something Igor Stravinsky might do, as are some of the rhythmic patterns. I was surprised to notice that much of the STAR WARS music was very similar to much of the music composed by Samuel Barber some forty years ago. Pieces like MEDEA'S MEDITATION AND DANCE OF VENGENCE Op. 23 A and THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL overture could have fit quite well in STAR WARS as they are just as adventurous and romantic and often manipulate the horn and string sections in very much the same way that Williams does. And anyone who has heard THE PLANETS by Gustav Holst will surely agree that the "Imperial Attack" music sounds a lot like MARS, THE BRINGER OF WAR. Finally, as is only logical, STAR WARS resembles in sound John Williams' own past film scores, particularly JAWS and THE TOWERING INFERNO. Still, his STAR WARS soundtrack, thus far in his career, is his crowning achievement and an incredibly original and creative work.

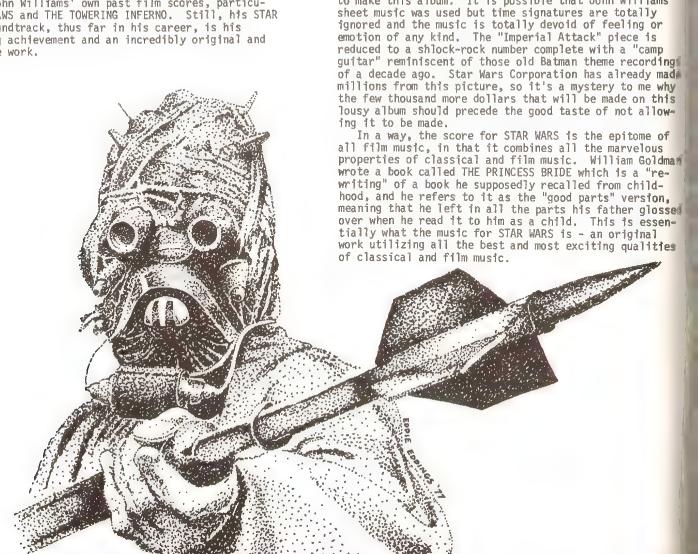
As hot a property as STAR WARS is, it is only natural that among the various incarnations and merchandising gimmicks springing up everywhere, that there should be other musicians doing their versions of the JOHN WILLIAMS music. PEOPLE magazine reported that a disco version of the title theme was in the works; I believe this is probably the record (besides the edited Williams' version) currently being heard on the Top 40 stations.

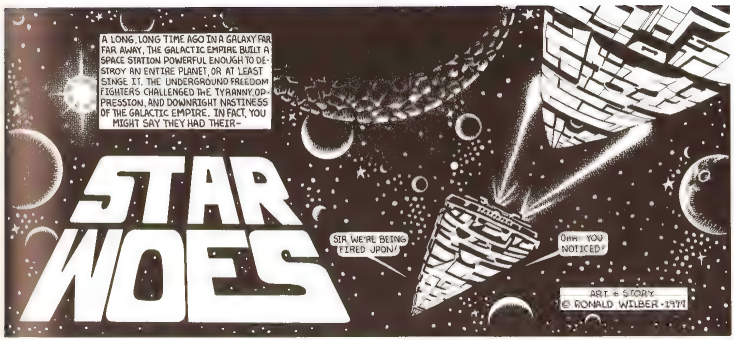
Of the four or five different albums currently on the market boasting of containing STAR WARS music, I have purchased two of them and listened to them very carefully. One is good, the other is dreadful.

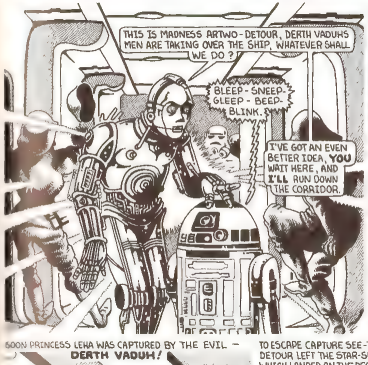
The good one is called MUSIC FROM OTHER GALAXIES AND PLANETS by Don Ellis & Survival. This record features only two selections from the film, the rest being original material. Ellis takes the title theme and Princess Leia's theme and turns them into very enjoyable jazz pieces. The entire album, these two cuts included, have the combined influences and sounds of popular jazz, the Johnny Carson band, soundtrack music and Broadway music. With the STAR WARS music, Ellis manages to retain the energy of the title theme and the romanticism of Princess Leia's theme, if perhaps on somewhat less of an epic scale. Anyone who likes good music should like the original material as well, some of which uses science fiction themes.

The bad record offers six pieces from the score, performed by the Electric Moog Orchestra, whoever they are. The album retails for $2.99, but unless you are a masochistic curiosity seeker, I would not recommend buying it. Some of the film's most exciting music was chosen, but due to the lack of talent on the part of the musicians, it comes off sounding incredibly uninspired. One wonders if "The Electric Moog Orchestra" is not someone who got a moog for Christmas and decided to make this album. It is possible that John Williams' sheet music was used but time signatures are totally ignored and the music is totally devoid of feeling or emotion of any kind. The "Imperial Attack" piece is reduced to a shlock-rock number complete with a "camp guitar" reminiscent of those old Batman theme recordings of a decade ago. Star Wars Corporation has already made millions from this picture, so it's a mystery to me why the few thousand more dollars that will be made on this lousy album should precede the good taste of not allowing it to be made.

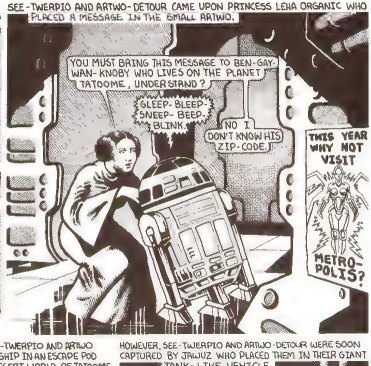
In a way, the score for STAR WARS is the epitome of all film music, in that it combines all the marvelous properties of classical and film music. William Goldman wrote a book called THE PRINCESS BRIDE which is a "rewriting" of a book he supposedly recalled from childhood, and he refers to it as the "good parts" version, meaning that he left in all the parts his father glossed over when he read it to him as a child. This is essentially what the music for STAR WARS is - an original work utilizing all the best and most exciting qualities of classical and film music.




A LONG, LONG TIME AGO IN A GALAXY FAR FAR AWAY, THE GALACTIC EMPIRE BUILT A SPACE STATION POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY AN ENTIRE PLANET OR AT LEAST STINSE IT. THE UNDERGROUND FREEDOM FIGHTERS CHALLENGED THE TYRANNY, OPPRESSION, AND DOWNRIGHT NASTINESS OF THE GALACTIC EMPIRE. IN FACT, YOU MIGHT SAY THEY HAD THEIR-
STAR WOES
STA WE'RE BEING FIRED UPON!
OHH- YOU NOTICED!
ART + STORY © RONALD WILBER • 1977


THIS IS MADNESS ARTWO-DETOUR, DERTH VADUHS MEN ARE TAKING OVER THE SHIP. WHATEVER SHALL WE DO?
BLEEP-SNEEP. GLEEP-BEEP. BLINK.
I'VE GOT AN EVEN BETTIER IDEA, YOU WAIT HERE, AND I'LL RUN DOWN THE CORRIDOR.

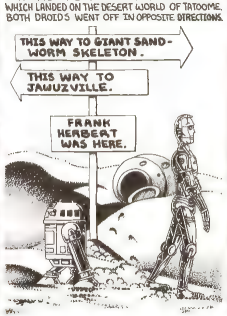
SEE-TWERPIO AND ARTWO-DETOUR CAME UPON PRINCESS LEHA ORGANIC WHO PLACED A MESSAGE IN THE SMALL ARTWO.


YOU MUST BRING THIS MESSAGE TO BEN-GAY-WAN-KNOBY WHO LIVES ON THE PLANET TATOOME, UNDERSTAND?
GLEEP-BLEEP. SNEEP-BEEP. BLINK.
NO I DON'T KNOW HIS ZIP-CODE.
THIS YEAR WHY NOT VISIT
METROPOLIS?

SOON PRINCESS LEHA WAS CAPTURED BY THE EVIL - **DERTH VADUH!**

WILL YOU GIVE ME THE PLANS TO THE SPACE STATION, OR MUST I HAVE YOU TORTURED?
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO WHICH WILL MAKE ME TALK.
OH NO? OKAY MEN - **MUSS UP HER HAIR!**
YOU FIEND!

TO ESCAPE CAPTURE SEE-TWERPIO AND ARTWO DETOUR LEFT THE STAR-SHIP IN AN ESCAPE POD WHICH LANDED ON THE DESERT WORLD OF TATOOME. BOTH DROIDS WENT OFF IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS.



HOWEVER, SEE-TWERPIO AND ARTWO-DETOUR WERE SOON CAPTURED BY JAWUZ WHO PLACED THEM IN THEIR GIANT TANK-LIKE VEHICLE.

CAPTURED BY JAWUZ AND LOCKED IN HERE WITH THESE OTHER MACHINES, WHAT DO WE DO NOW, ARTWO?
SNEEP-GLEEP. BEEP. BLEEP. BLINK.
THAT'S NO GOOD, BESIDES I HAVE NEITHER A DECK OF CARDS OR AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE GAME, GO FISH.

THE JAWUZ STOPPED AT A FARM, AND THERE THEY PUT THE DROIDS ON SALE.
WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU DO?
I COOK, CLEAN, WASH, GET THE KIDS OFF TO SCHOOL, BUT I WANT WEDNESDAYS OFF AND I WON'T WORK ON WEEKENDS.
IT'S HARD TO FIND ANY DROID THAT DOES.
WE'LL TAKE HIM AND THE LITTLE DROID TOO, I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR A GOOD DOORSTOP.
WHILE CLEANING ARTOO-DETOUR THE DROID REVEALS PART OF HIS MESSAGE TO BEN-GAY-WAN-KNOBY. LATER THE SMALL DROID LEAVES AND LUKE SKYWALKER AND SEE-THREPIO SET OUT AFTER HIM.
WHAT COULD MAKE HIM LEAVE?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS YOUNGER GENERATION OF DROIDS IS COMING TO.
THEY FINALLY FOUND ARTOO-DETOUR AND WERE RESCUED FROM THE SANDY-PEOPLE BY BEN-GAY-WAN-KNOBY.
WHOOOOO... PUT THE BOMP!
SEE HOW THEY FLEE FROM MY SUPERIOR POWERS AND MY GREATER INTELLIGENCE.
SEE HOW WE FLEE FROM HIS BAD BREATH.
BEN JOINED LUKE IN HIS MISSION TO RESCUE THE PRINCESS.
I HOPE TO FIND A PILOT HERE WHO CAN FLY US TO CALDERON.
WHAT A COLLECTION OF BIZARRE CREATURES.
THIS IS NOTHING. YOU SHOULD BE HERE ON A FRIDAY NIGHT.
GET A LOAD OF THOSE TWO.
YIKES!
BEN AND LUKE FINALLY LOCATE PILOT HAM SLOWO AND HIS CO-PILOT CHEWSBACCA.
COULD YOU TAKE US TO CALDERON?
WELL IT'S A LONG TRIP. WE'D HAVE TO PACK...
WE'LL PAY.
WE'RE ALL SET TO GO!
NASSAU
DUNE
BRONCO
TATOOINE
TOGETHER THEY SET OUT IN HAN'S STARSHIP FOR THE PLANET CALDERON, UNBEKNOWNST TO THEM IT HAS BEEN COMPLETELY OBLITERATED BY THE DEATH STAR.
THE PLANET'S GONE!
I BELIEVE IT WAS BLOWN UP BY THE DEATH STAR - THAT SPACE-STATION OVER THERE.
HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE THAT'S THE DEATH STAR?
JUST A HUNCH.
DEATH STAR
BODY BY FISHER

THE DEATH STAR TOOK HOLD OF HAMS' SHIP AND PULLED IT IN. THE REBELS HID ON BOARD THEIR SHIP, AND LATER DISGUISED AS IMPERIAL STORM-TROOPERS THEY WENT AND FOUND THE PRINCESS.
WE'RE HERE TO RESCUE YOU PRINCESS/
GREAT, HOW DO WE ESCAPE?
WELL A - WE DIDN'T PLAN..
SOME RESCUE THIS TURNED OUT TO BE, YOU DIDN'T PLAN ANYTHING RIGHT, WE COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED!
WE SAVED YOU, WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT?
A LITTLE RESPECT.
WE'RE GIVING AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE!
PRINCESS LEHA OPENED A GARBAGE CHUTE AND THEY ALL JUMPED INTO IT.
LOOK, CHEWSBACCA DOESN'T LIKE THE SMELL OF THIS GARBAGE, HE'S TRYING TO GET OUT!
MAYBE HE DOESN'T LIKE THE WALLS CLOSING TOGETHER!
WHAT SMELL?
GAS MASK
THEY FINALLY ESCAPED THE GARBAGE DISPOSAL AND RAN BACK TO THEIR SPACE - SHIP.
DON'T WORRY CHEWSY THESE RAY BLASTS CAN'T HURT YOU.
THEY AREN'T EVEN REAL, MERELY A SPECIAL-EFFECT.
THEY... EWW HEH! HEH! OUCH.
THE SMALL BAND OF REBELS MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO HAMS' SHIP AND DISCOVERED DERTH VADUH AND BEN-GAY-WAN-KNOBY LOCKED IN A BATTLE TO THE DEATH WITH THEIR LIGHT SABRES.
YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE RETURNED OLD MAN.
I HAD TO, I LEFT MY GOOD PAIR OF I SHOES BEHIND
DERTH VADUH WAS NOT ABOVE USING ANY TRICK TO WIN.
YOUR FLY IS OPEN.
WHA..?
NO IT ISN'T!
SORRY, MY MISTAKE.
HE'S GONE LORD VADUH. ALL THAT'S LEFT ARE HIS CLOTHES.
AND HIS GOOD PAIR OF SHOES.
THEY LOOK MORE LIKE SANDALS.
I SAY THEY'RE SHOES AND ANYONE WHO DISAGREES CAN ANSWER TO ME./
YOU KNOW YOU'RE CORRECT, THEY ARE SHOES/ RIGHT GUYS?
YESSIR!
YESSIR!
YESSIR!
13.

LUKE, HAN, PRINCESS LEHA, SEE THWERPIO, AND ARTWO DETOUR HEAD FOR THE REBEL BASE SADDENED BY THE LOSS OF THEIR FRIEND.
HE HAD SUCH A KIND HEART...
AND CORONETS.
AS SOON AS THEY LANDED PLANS WERE MADE TO RETURN AND ATTACK THE DEATH STAR.
AND AFTER THAT YOU GO HERE AND THEN HERE AND YOU'LL BE THERE. ANY QUESTIONS?
IT'S AWFULLY COMPLICATED.
YES, AND THESE ARE JUST THE DIRECTIONS ON HOW TO GET TO THE MEN'S ROOM, NOW FOR THE PLANS ON DESTROYING THE DEATH STAR.
HAM SLOWO AND CHEWSBACCA DECIDED NOT TO GO ON THIS MISSION BUT LUKE AND THE OTHER REBEL PILOTS DID.
LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT THING!
THE SPACE STATION?
NO, THE PIMPLE ON MY NOSE! I CAN'T WAIT TILL IT COMES TO A HEAD SO I CAN POP IT.
THE REBELS SUFFER SERIOUS LOSSES UNTIL ONLY LUKE IS LEFT.
ZAP!
IF I MISS, THE UNIVERSE WILL BE SUBJUGATED AND THE E MOVIE WILL END ON A SOUR NOTE, I CAN'T MISS.
10
HAM RETURNED TO AIDE LUKE, AND WITH HIS HELP AND THE HELP OF THE FORCE LUKE WAS ABLE TO DESTROY THE DEATH STAR.
WOW! THAT HURTS THE EARS!
BLAM
YEAH, THAT'S AN AWFUL LOUD EXPLOSION FOR AN AIRLESS VACUUM!
AND A GRATEFUL UNIVERSE WAS PROUD TO PAY TRIBUTE TO IT'S HEROES.
WAIT A MINUTE, MY MEDAL HAS MY NAME SPELLED WRONG-
GRONK*
I DON'T EVEN GET A LOUSY MEDAL!
IT'S LUKE NOT LUCAS! WHO WOULD BELIEVE A NAME LIKE THAT?
WHO INDEED?
THE END
4.

DARTH VADER'S REVENGE, or WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AFTER THE CLOSING CREDITS

RALPH

THE STAR WARS COSMOS

BY MIKE KUNTZ

"It is a period of civil war. Rebel forces, striking from a hidden base, have won their first victory against the evil galactic Empire.

During the battle, rebel spies managed to steal the plans to the Empire's ultimate weapon, the DEATH STAR, an armored space station with enough power to destroy an entire planet.

Pursued by the Empire's sinister agents, Princess Leia races home aboard her starship, custodian of the stolen plans that can save her people and restore freedom to the galaxy..."

And so the viewer is abruptly, though efficiently conveyed to an entirely different locale: "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away..." where virtually anything can happen (and frequently does). The audience is introduced (respectively) to R2D2, C3PO, Darth Vader, Princess Leia, Luke Skywalker, Obi-Wan Kenobi, Moff Tarkin, Han Solo and Chewbacca, and is provided with a suitable amount of information on all; quite an undertaking for 17 minutes of viewing time.

Yet in those begrudgingly brief 2 hours, an entire galaxy is rather explicitly outlined, and what aspects aren't are easily assumable to even the average viewer with only a passing acquaintance with science fiction. Part of the easy understanding can be credited to the lack of "science" in this science fiction film, or even more accurately - "space fantasy," a term that writer-director George Lucas is quick to quote. Natural physical laws need not apply in this galaxy, though it is more accurate to say that this galaxy, the "STAR WARS" galaxy, is scientifically one step beyond ours, while being easy to identify with because of it's atmosphere of many different Earth eras. In evidence are overtones of Samurai, Japan, Mideival Europe, Ancient Egypt, 18th century Colonial America, and even modern day Americana.

The prologue to the book "STAR WARS: From the Adventures of Luke Skywalker" offers an explanation that most affectionados easily take for granted in the film; an overzealous senator, aided by most, opposed by few, seized power in the Republic and declared a New Order, thus distinguishing it from the Old Republic. Enforced by the Regional Governors and their Dark Lords, the New Order is still somewhat governed by the Imperial Senate, at least until sometime during "STAR WARS" when it is announced that, with the advent of the Death Star's completion, the Emperor has finally had enough intestinal fortitude to dissolve the "last remnants of the Old Republic." Thus the stage is set, the lights activated, the players at the ready. The theme is good against evil. The premise: A galactic rebellion against the seemingly undefeatable forces of a vast Empire. And for 2 hours of delight to the "everyman" Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia Organa, Han Solo and crew right interstellar wrongs in an easily understandable, if only somewhat plausible, cosmos.

I: THE WORLDS

But just as man on Earth continues to explore his galaxy, a discussion of the "STAR WARS" galaxy will never be complete, therefore never wasted. So on our trackless journey through this galaxy, be it Andromeda or in a nameless galactic nebulae, our first stop would have to be the planet Tatooine, the first glimpse which we are afforded in this fantastic cosmos.

Tatooine is a harsh desert world, orbiting twin stars Tatoo I & II. There are many aspects of this world well worth exploring. It seems that the largest city we are told of (and shown in the original 123 minute version of the film, before Lucas decided to cut the character of Biggs Darklighter to a mere "Red Three" in the last battle scene) is a town known as Anchorhead, the greater hub of which is Tosche Station, where Luke frequently cavorts with Deak, Windy and his lifelong friend, Biggs.

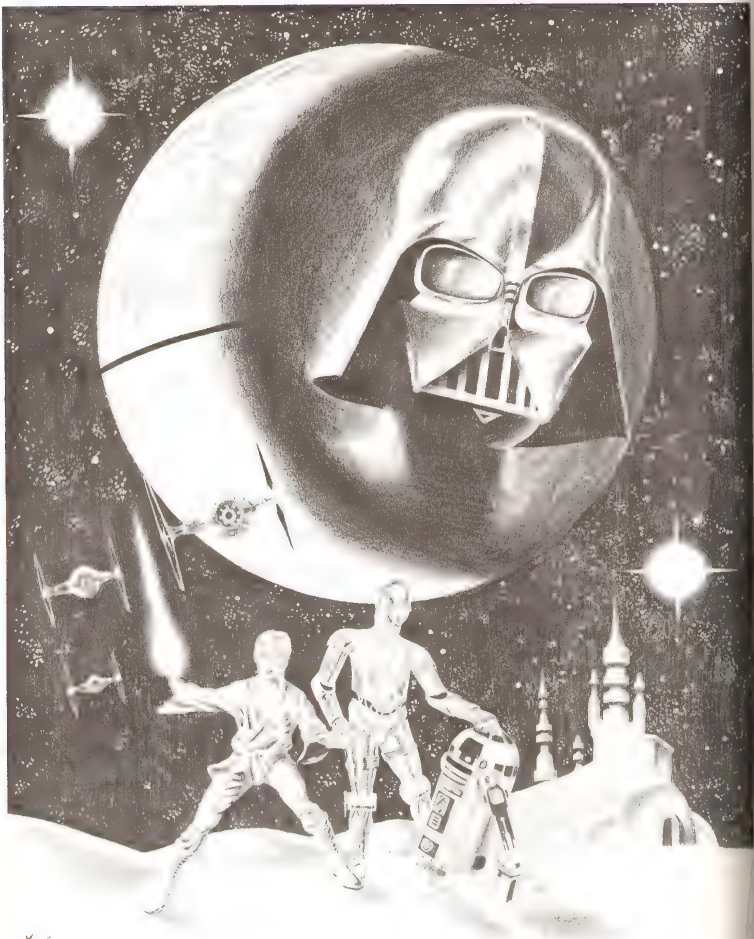
Because of the hot, arid, almost unbearable surface climate of Tatooine, anyone wishing to farm, or even survive, must keep vaporators in a constant state of repair. (So that's what those funny-looking spires are). Vaporators extract the tenuous, precious moisture from the atmosphere and utilize them to aid the survival of the settlers. (Tatooine's only native races are the Jawas and Tusken Raiders).

Travel on Tatooine is seldom, if ever, on foot. Anyone attempting to traverse the vast deserts that separate settlements, would finish their journey mid-way; a pile of bleached bones in the wind, or a meal for one of the huge sandsnakes known to prowl the wastes. At night the added menace of the Sandpeople (Tusken Raiders) becomes apparent. Their howls and grunts mingling with the screams of their prey (animal or human) usually accompany the night's cacophony of chirping insects and scurrying womp-rats.

Therefore, other modes of transportation must be utilized. For travel with the added luxury of protection, the Sandpeople ride the awesome Banthas, huge quadruped creatures that resemble massive wooly rams. Other living mounts are found in the tremendous monitor lizards and the strange camel like beast that we see briefly outside the Mos Eisley cantina. But the more conventional forms are the landspeeders and skyhoppers. The landspeeder is an anti-gravity vehicle usually built for only two people. There was room in Luke's, however, for the droids to sit on the back, next to the primary thruster. Skyhoppers are seen cruising along the ground in Mos Eisley (and 3PO hides behind one in Luke's garage), though they are standardly used for atmospheric travel. Of course, Tatooine's aboriginal inhabitants, the Jawas prefer to use a massive colony vehicle, a sandcrawler. The reason is probably two-fold; because of their diminuitive size, they would fall easy prey to the Tusken Raiders, and the sandcrawler has plenty of room to store the constant lot of saleable droids. (This is not to say that the Jawas live solely in sandcrawlers. According to George Lucas, the Jawas live in villages).

In the debriefing scene in the rebel stronghold, Luke mentions that he bulls-eyes womp-rats "in my T-16 back home," and I think it's safe to assume that the small spaceship model Luke fiddles with in his garage earlier is the self-same T-16. But most viewers don't realize that in the background, at the entrance to the garage, just left of the walkway, is the full-size T-16!

Leaving Tatooine at Mos Eisley Spaceport, a sort of inter-galactic Ramada Inn, we proceed to Alderaan, which was shown briefly, and was a reasonable facsimile of Earth. The Princess says nothing of what is mentioned as her home world, other than that her father, a leader of the rebellion, is awaiting the stolen Death Star plans. Though the entire planetary system is named Alderaan, this was the first and only world destroyed by


Kurtz

the ill-fated Death Star.

Because of it's location too far from colonized regions of the galaxy, and despite it's willingness to support sapient life, the fourth moon (of many) of Yavin has been virtually ignored, therefore the installation of a rebel base was unnoticed. Though the base itself will of course have to be relocated, of interest is the fact that a civilization rose and fell on this moon, leaving behind not a trace, save for the numerous temples that dot the jungle. Yavin itself is an alluring, but deadly gas giant, made impossible to exist on by the 800 km/hour winds and cyclones of lethal gases that conceal a surface of frozen liquids.

We are told very little of Corellia (or Corellis), but mercenary Han Solo is a Corellian and he flies "a Corellian pirateship," modified, of course. This planet must be under Imperial jurisdiction, for Solo mentions that on occasion he's had to outrun the big Corellian, Imperial Starships. Probably located nearby Han's home world is the as yet unnamed Wookie planet. It seems (again according to George Lucas) that the planet is a tropical world, and as the Inca inhabited the Amazon rainforests, so do the Wookie tribes still live in the jungles of their world. From Corellia, this world is probably just a quick jump through hyperspace away...

And speaking of hyperspace, it should be explained (drawing from actual scientific theories and other fictionalized accounts) that hyperspace is an entirely different dimension, co-existing in perfect with our own, where time and space have a vastly different ratio, and light speed is only the beginning of the scale. The engines of a ship equipped with hyperspace power shift the axis of this delicate dimensional plane and thrust the ship into this dimension and out again with the flick of a switch. More about that later.

The one other planet of note (an ironic one at that) is Kessel. What a place! There's a hell somewhere in the galaxy, Kessel would have to be a leading contender. A fate worse than death is evidently to be sent to the Spice Mines of Kessel. And a test of true speed (or of it endurance) is the Kessel run, and you can be sure that no one runs to Kessel. (When Han says he's made the Kessel run in "less than 12 parsecs" he's not being inaccurate scientifically. According to producer Gary Kurtz, Han says this as a brag, hoping he can fast-talk Luke and Ben. Look at Kenobi's face after Han says it this time and you'll see why Han stopped that direction of conversation somewhat briskly!)

II: THE BEINGS

Let's get one thing straight at the outset. Humans (i.e. Homo sapiens, or a remarkable facsimile thereof) are found on Tatooine, Alderaan, Corellia and (for now) the fourth moon of Yavin, the latter being a smattering of the other three, plus. Since most of the readers are humans, a discussion of this race would prove tiresome.

But we are presented with some of the most imaginative aliens this side of The Outer Limits . Most are seen in the Mos Eisley cantina, and briefly at that. Though it seems unlikely that all of these motley life forms can exist in a bar room containing one atmosphere, we don't know if a Universal Atmosphere has been discovered in this galaxy. And besides, it looks good...

It would be pure conjecture to discuss any of the cantina creatures in detail, but in evidence are creatures of obviously different, and at times extreme environments. The brown-skinned walrus-like beast that menaces Luke, as well as the huge, four-eyed wooly creature, would appear to be natives of an arctic climate, while the other bizarre aliens would be virtually impossible to place. In evidence are wolf-men, hog-men, rat-men, and creatures so far removed as not to be referred to as men. One such creature of interest is a hugh praying mantis that is standing against the wall in the scene after Ben rids the world of Han of his right arm. Other interesting creatures include the "used landspeeder salesman," the maggot-creature that irritates one of the wolf-men (not a wise move), the cantina band, and of course - Greedo, Jabba's mercenary hitman that finds himself on the wrong end of Solo's blaster. It would be interesting to speculate as to the worlds these beings hail from and their habits and lifestyles, but that's a whole 'nother story.

We can make general statements about Tatooine's two native races, the Jawas and Sandpeople. Jawas are strange, meter-high creatures who prowl the wastes of Tatooine collecting and selling virtually anything they can. Very little is known about the actual biology of Jawas, as all that one can see are their furry/scaley hands and their red-orange eyes glowing from within their hooded cloaks. They scurry about on the ground, preferring the relative comfort and safety of their villages or sandcrawlers. Even at night, one can hear their ecstatic cries of "Hotini!" as they find something valuable to drag into their sandcrawler for later sale. They appear to be benevolent, almost childishly so, and even fullgrown Jawas would sooner scurry away from an approaching stranger than stand ground, even well armed.

Thusly, the Jawas are frequently preyed upon by the vicious Sandpeople or Tusken Raiders. Swathed in rough fabric with steel, filtered tubes for eyes and nostrils, these nomads roam the desert wastelands as do the Jawas, though unlike their midget cohabitants, they raid and kill wantonly. Over the eons it seems some ill-fated quirk of evolution occurred and the Raiders now must wear elaborate and clumsy breathing apparatus or perish from what would now be a toxic atmosphere. Unlike the comparatively sophisticated Jawas, the Sandpeople seem to group together reluctantly, out of convenience, and their weaponry is as primitive as their habits. Each Tusken Raider is equipped with a meter long metal rod, bladed on one end, curved, clubbed and pointed on the other, called a gaffii (gaderffii in the novel) stick, which proves to be most efficient, effective enough to shatter steel. Fortunately, a Mexican standoff occurs between the numerous human settlers and these marginally human creatures and any attack by either side is a rarity. However....

The only other race we are introduced to is the Wookies. Wookies (if Chewbacca is average) are six to eight feet tall, anthropoid and covered with a coat of thick fur (making clothing unnecessary). The Wookies speak in a complex series of grunts and growls that are understandable only by tone to most, though Han and Ben have no trouble communicating with Chewbacca. Wookies have a lifespan of 350-400 years, though they mature early and are adults at about 85 - 100. Though the Wookies bright blue eyes soften an otherwise awesome facade, Wookies are known for their lack of emotional control. Though they possess an intelligence equal to that of man, their fierce temper and tremendous strength make them unpredictable. A curious flaw in this otherwise gallant, if oft-times unreasonable character is a strange streak of cowardice that cannot be compromised.

According to George Lucas, the Wookie as a civilization are slightly primitive, living in the jungle and behaving much like the Indians, even down to dancing around tribal fires in a ritual that may be seen in a future sequel. He describes the Wookies as "noble savages."

III: THE HARDWARE

Almost a species unto themselves, the droids of this galaxy serve many functions. Their diversity in function is matched by their dissimilarity of appearance. The droids that work most closely with humans, the "C" class droids, such as translators or protocol specialists, have been designed to approximate humanoid form to the extent of possessing distinct personalities of their own. Other models of droids are seen throughout the galaxy, some resembling insect men, others totally unrecognizable as anything biological, built for specific purposes, such as the interrogation droid seen with Vader in the princess' cell. The most versatile of the droid class, however, is the R2 class. These short, cylindrical robots are geared towards computer

repair, information retrieval and T-45 navigation, but most possess such added features as a fire extinguisher, infrared receptor, holographic projector and thin metal arms for mechanical repair purposes.

Because their inborn personalities invariably lead to dislike of an owner, all droids are built with a receptor to hold a restraining bolt. Such a bolt limits the function of the motivator and servo-motors to prevent escape of the rebellious droid. In some areas of the galaxy, droids are frowned upon, as in the Mos Eisley area. Many aliens resent the friendly overtures of a mere machine and tend to discriminate against them. Most droids possess a surprising amount of loyalty to all humans, however, and though it is obvious that Asimov's Laws of Robotics do not apply, droids probably would sacrifice themselves for their masters, not as part of programming, but in friendship, just as a human friend would do.

Threepio and Artoo are in the gantry office when the door bursts open and five stormtroopers enter with their blasters drawn.....Hold it. What's a blaster? It's obvious that the blaster is a gun, and is as common in this galaxy as a .38 is to a policeman or a six-shooter to Hopalong Cassidy. The exact nature of a blaster is unknown, though. It has at least two settings, stun and "blast", and doesn't seem to ever need reloading or recharging. Most likely, a blaster amplifies and projects pure energy at different levels, being recharged from another source."Stun" is a mild dose of this plasmic energy that overloads a person's nervous system, rendering them unconscious. "Blast"...well, this setting speaks for itself, and if it doesn't, ask the bartender at the Cantina. He had to clean up Greedo! Of interest is the fact that the blaster-type guns which line the trench of the Death Star are referred to as "turbo lasers". Also, a blaster beam richochets in a trash bin which is "magnetically sealed", so who knows?

Other weapons in evidence: Luke's rifle on Tatooine, the Jawa's motivator deactivating gun, and a weapon not in the film, but frequently in publicity stills - a crossbow type blaster carried by Chewbacca. Blasters themselves come in at least two different sizes; a holster type and a large shotgun sized weapon of probably more power. Because of the relatively short span on time of Imperial rule (though the Republic ruled before that) and because of the vastness of the galaxy, it is unlikely that blasters are licensed.

Huge, cannon-like, turreted blasters are standard equipment on Corellian ships, as is witnessed during the escape from the Death Star by the Millenium Falcon. Guns of similar type, if not color, are also found on Imperial ships, be they short-range TIE fighters or hugh Star Destroyers. (Know what TIE stands for? "The Imperial Empire". They must've had a ball making this movie...)

The first ship we see is the Rebel Blockade Runner, an envoy ship of the Old Republic that accomodates about 200 people and a smattering of droids. This well-armed ship is of impressive design, with it's honeycomb of engines equalling the powers of three thrusters of an Imperial Destroyer, that managed, with some difficulty to overtake it. The Star Destroyer itself is a staggering ship, reminiscent of an Earth battleship in some ways, that would house virtually a small city within it. With a massive docking hanger on it's underside, it

easily draws the smaller ship into a boarding position. It would also be intuitively obvious that the huge Destroyer would carry within it several short-range TIE fighters since planetfall in such an immense ship would be impossible.

Skyhoppers are small, one-man suborbital craft and are generally used for intercity transport, as are the landspeeders.

Getting back to the Star Destroyers -- The Star Destroyer is equipped with hyperspace power (though unless you're sure of your enemy's destination, pursuit through hyperspace is impossible) as is the Millenium Falcon, Han Solo's Corellian pirateship. It is impossible to say whether or not Corellian ships are normally equipped with such power, as Han says he's made some modifications himself. The Falcon is obviously equipped with some sort of anti-gravity drive that would enable it to take off vertically from the docking bay in which it was berthed. Because of it's use as a pirate vessel, the ship is equipped with, as well as blasters, numerous sophisticated deflector mechanisms, and a device used to jam transmissions from a pursuit craft. Perhaps this is a good time to define Han's involvement as a "pirate". The only crime that we are aware Han commits is smuggling, even though he is/was under the employ of a sort of interplanetary syndicate. This would make him a mercenary, a profiteer, but not a "pirate." Or a very benevolent pirate.

The Falcon, before it's modification, was a freighter, and because of the lateral placing of the cockpit, there's plenty of room for cargo, usually contraband. The greatest advantage the ship has is the enemy's underestimation of the fantastically maneuverable "freighter," and the unprecidented firepower it carries, enabling it to evade and outfight a legion of TIE fighters.ighters.

A TIE Fighter is a small, high velocity craft that makes the damndest sound as it zips through space. The ship consists of a spherical main body capable of holding one man, sandwiched between two hexagonal, thin plated "wings" on stalks. They are equipped with blaster banks and obviously have no deflector shielding, relying instead on their superior speed. They are expendable ships (I wonder if the pilots know that?) and are used as short range resistance vessels or sentry ships.

Darth Vader's TIE job, however, had upswept (and downswept) wings which afforded added speed and maneuvering power. The engines behind the spherical body were also longer, and the ship might have been even more than a short range craft. One thing that's bothered me, though - how do TIE fighters land? Or do they? Are they specifically designed for slots for the wings to slip into the hanger floor? Are they kept in stasis, or held by grappling lines? Does the Empire even expect them to return from their missions? Then what about the re-con runs to planets from larger destroyers? Perplexing.

Other ships that we see in this vast galaxy are the X-Wing and Gold Squadron Fighters. The Red Squadron's T-65 X-Wing ships take off with the wings juxtaposed, then the foils lock into a split position for attack, giving the T-65 it's colloquial "X-Wing" name. The tip of each foil (4 in all) carries heavy blast power for ship-to-ship combat or strafing runs. The less heavily armed Gold Fighters have turbo lasers mounted on the nose, and both designs can be equipped with a single proton porpedo to blast through ray shielding. A sophisticated symbiosis occurs between these ships and their R2 unit navigators. Should any instrumentation become faulty, the R2 droid is strategically placed atop the ship to repair it with one of the robot's many repair arms.

The flight instrumentation of the 4 engined T-65 fighter is very similar to the controls of a standard skyhopper, thus requiring little training for an inexperienced pilot. An added feature of the ship is the ability of the cockpit to eject from the rest of the ship in an emergency. (Did you expect Porkins to eject himself into space with a parachute or something?) Both models of ships are also equipped with deflector shields and an extremely sophisticated targeting computer system. Without the highspeed maneuverability of the Reds, or the heavy artillery of the Golds, the missile run and subsequent destruction of the Death Star would have been impossible.

Which leads us to the most impressive piece of space hardware in the "STAR WARS" galaxy - the Death Star. The Death Star was the most ambitious undertaking of the New Order, a planet sized space station with a supra-powerful reactor system (albeit unstable) that not only powers that station itself (which probably can travel through hyperspace) but also the powerful octo-generated ray that can explode an entire planet at will. The population of such a station would be (if the station is the size of Earth's moon) three times the population of an ordinary planet that size because of the various internal levels. Several command centers would have to be located on various parts of the station, as one man could not effectively control it. Grand Moff Tarkin's section would seem to have been the most important. Alas, the station had but one flaw-the exhaust port below the main port that led straight to the reactor core. (Contrary to popular belief, the trench down which the rebels flew is not the one circling the station (that one contains access ports to hangers) but one that starts at the top of the station and runs about 1/4 of the way down).

IV: THE FORCE

Briefly, the Force is, by the gospel of Obi-Wan Kenobi, an energy field created by all living things that surrounds, penetrates, and binds the galaxy together. A valid scientific concept actually, conceived by Albert Einstein and called the Theory of the Unified Field. All matter is linked by this field, much like Kenobi's Force.

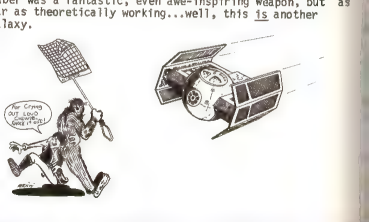
It would appear that the Force is electromagnetic in nature, as the brain and thought process of living things is essentially an electromagnetic/electrochemical process.

A Jedi Knight, master of the Force, summons a subconscious ability to manipulate the Force; though the Force, once summoned, can control one's actions. There are, however, some minor drawbacks...

One not having enough control over this Force can be " seduced by the Dark Side..." The Dark Side consisting of evil impulses, which at times can be stronger than the good.

The Jedi Knights, guardians of peace, justice and freedom in the Old Republic, commanded the power of this mystical energy field for the purposes of good. Were it not for Darth Vader, master of the Dark Side, the Jedi probably would have suppressed the evil overthrow and establishment of the New Order.

The weapon on the Jedi Knight is a lightsabre, and each Jedi had his own personally tailored weapon, and it seemed that each carrier's lightsabre had it's own color beam. Luke's beam was predominantly white, swaying toward the color of Ben's, a blue-white beam of greater power. Lord Vader's black, menacing sabre emits a bright red beam of exceptional length, possibly signifying the greater power of evil or Kenobi's weakness when matched against Vader's greater swordsmanship. The saber was a fantastic, even awe-inspiring weapon, but as far as theoretically working...well, this is another galaxy.



A STAR WARS BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY DELLA VAN HISE

The following is a list of magazines (including fanzines) which have featured articles, or even just reviews, on STAR WARS. This is not as complete as I would have liked it to be as Star Wars Corporation had offered to supply a virtually complete list of this type for my use but they never followed through. Basically this list is just in alphabetical order and lists the magazine title, the title of the article and the page count including whether or not it featured any color photos or art. Rather than rate each one individually (as all are pretty much of equal value, that being just average) I have put a star only by those which I feel are superior in content and of special value to the collector. Most fall in to 3 catagories: 1) a basic review of the film, 2) the fan magazine gosh-wow approach to the film and its stars, and 3) the typical articles on how the film was made, the people behind it, etc. which are virtually interchangable one with the other.

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AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER (7/77) - "Behind The Scenes of STAR WARS", "Miniature and Mechanical Special Effects for STAR WARS", "Composite Optical and Photographic Effects for STAR WARS", "The Dolby Sound System for Recording STAR WARS" - 23 pages including 8 pages of color - (*)

AMERICAN FILM (4/77) - "George Lucas Goes Far Out" - 6 pages, color cover - (*)

CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT (3/77) - 1 page STAR WARS preview.

CINEFANTASTIQUE Vol. 5 #2 - Brief preview announcement.
Vol. 5 #4 - 1 page book review, 4 stills.
Vol. 6 #1 - Breif sour comment by editor.
Vol. 6 #2 - Full page in-depth review.

CIRCUS (6/77) - "The Adventures of Luke Skywalker", 3 pages, all color stills.

CIRCUS (9/15/77) - "STAR WARS Sends A Message (Re: Holograms)" - 1 page article and 2 page color poster of C3PO.

COMPASS (7/77) - 1 page movie review & 3 page general review. 4 pages with stills.

" (8/77) - "Why America Goes To See STAR WARS", S.W. Club info, 1 1/2 pages with stills.

COSMOS (11/77) - "STAR WARS" (Review essay by Samuel R. Delaney) - 4 pages with 4 color stills.

CRACKED (11/77) - 7 page STAR WARS parody & color cover.

" (12/77) - "STAR WARZ II" - 6 page parody

CRAZY #32 (12/77) - cover plus poor STAR WARS satire.

CREEM (9/77) - "Flash Gordon Slept Here" - 1 page

" (10/77) - "STAR TREK to STAR WARS" - Approximately 3 pages with stills.

DELAP'S FANTASY & S.F. REVIEW - Editorial with STAR WARS mayerial, "Media Arts" section-Fancomments & follow-up, General reviews - Book, soundtrack Over 5 pages with stills.

FAMOUS MONSTERS STAR WARS SPECTACULAR (7/77) - 41 pages of STAR WARS plus color covers.

FAMOUS MONSTERS #137 - "Robots, Aliens,Spacemen Battle In STAR WARS - 6 pages, mostly stills, "STAR WARS Gazing" - 4 pages - Front cover.

FAMOUS MONSTERS #138 - "Star Swarm-The Experts Speak-Do You Agree", 6 pages - STAR WARS Quiz, 1 pg. Color covers.

FAMOUS MONSTERS #139 - "Star Swarm-Part 2" - 9 pages Color covers.

FANS OF CENTRAL JERSEY (6/77) - "STAR WARS: A Phenomenon" - 2 pages.

FANTASCENE (Fall 1975) - Small announcement of the impending start of filming of STAR WARS.

FANTASCENE (Summer 1976) - Small announcement plus still of surface of Death Star.

FANTASCENE #3 (Spring 1977) - Cover & 4 pages of stills.

FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION (10/77) - 4 page commentary-review (no stills).

FILM COMMENT (7-8/77) - "A Space Illiad: STAR WARS I", "Star Drek: Starwars War II" (opposing views), total 3 pages with stills.

FILMS & FILMING (8/77) - STAR WARS Preview, 2 pages of stills with captions.

INTERVIEW (6/77) - "STAR WARS stars" (interview with Hamill, Ford Fisher) - 2 pages with stills.

MARVEL SPECIAL EDITION - STAR WARS - Vol. 1 #1 (1977) 56 page color comic adaptation.

MARVEL SPECIAL EDITION - STAR WARS - Vol. 1 #2 (1977) 56 page color comic adaptation concluded.

MEDIASCENE #22 (Nov.-Dec. 76) - "The Making Of George Lucas' Epic S.F. Adventure" - 5 pages, stills, some color, "Star Wars Marvel Style" - 1 page advance on Marvel Comic (Roy Thomas), STAR WARS storyboard - 2 pages. (*).

MODERN SCREEN (9/77) - "STAR WARS Special FX Secrets" 3 pages wth stills, "Mark Hamill Nearly Dies In Crash" - 2 pages

NATIONAL ENQUIRER (9/12/77) - "STAR WARS Star Hurt In Crash" - typical 1/2 page junk.

NEWSPAPER OF FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION Vol. 1 # 1 ('77) About 20 pages on STAR WARS plus drab color centerspread.

NEWSWEEK (5/30/77) - "Fun In Space" - 2 pages & 6 color stills.

PEOPLE (7/18/77) - "Off The Screen" - 6 pages with stills

PHOTOPLAY (9/77) - "How STAR WARS Works" - 2 page article with some stills.

PIZZAZZ #1 (10/77) - "Meet The STAR WARS Superstars" - 2 pages, 6 color stills, 3 page color STAR WARS comic strip.

PREVIEW (9/77) - "STAR WARS: Are You Ready For A Sequel" 3 pages with stills.

" (10/77) - CARRIE FISHER-"I'm Still Coming Down To Earth" - 2 pages with stills, various unrelated stills throughout.

" (11/77) - "Everything You Always Wanted To Know About STAR WARS...And Then Some." - 4 pages.

READER'S DIGEST (9/77) - Condensed reprint from TIME of 5/30/77 plus color piece attached to cover.

ROLLING STONE (10/25/77) - In-depth Lucas Interview - 10 pages, stills, some color. "Grand Illusions" 1 1/2 pages on FX, stills. Color STAR WARS cover. (*) It's the Lucas interview on STAR WARS!

RONA BARRETT'S GOSSIP (10/77) - "Mark Hamill-The Way They Were On STAR WARS" - 4+ pages with stills, "Harrison Ford: Get Close To Han Solo Of STAR WARS" - 1 page with still. Alec Guinness - 2 page of stills from various movies of his.

SAGA (10/77) - 1 page commentary, 3 pages of color stills.

SCIENCE FANTASY FILM CLASSICS Vol. 1 #1 (Winter 77) - 4

pages plus cover in color. Interviews with the stars of STAR WARS, "The Force", "Music of STAR WARS", FX Wizards", "Sword of Light", "A Flash Of Light", "Lucas & Tolkein", plus 22" x 32" color poster. Over 22 pages of STAR WARS.

SCIENCE FICTION HORROR & FANTASY (Fall '77) - STAR WARS color covers, some interior color including some of McQuarrie's paintings. "The Making of STAR WARS", "The People Who Made STAR WARS", "Music of STAR WARS", blueprints of x-wing & y-wing.

SCREEN SUPERSTAR #8 ('77) STAR WARS SPECIAL - 62 pages Most stills in color. All STAR WARS.

SIGHT AND SOUND (Summer '76) - "In The Picture" - Early announcement of STAR WARS plus McQuarrie painting of Sand People in B&W.

SIGHT AND SOUND (Winter '76) - 2 pages mostly stills, very early publicity.

S.F. GALORE (Fall '77) - "The Saga Of STAR WARS" - 8 pages, lots of stills.

SPACE WARS (10/77) - 5 page general article on STAR WARS. 13 pages of color plus color cover.

STARLOG PHOTO GUIDEBOOK-SPACESHIPS (1977) - Color back cover only of a Ralph McQuarrie painting.

STARLOG #6 (6/77) - 1 page preview, color pics.
" #7 (8/77) - "Creating The Space-Fantasy Universe Of STAR WARS" - 11 pages plus color stills.
" #8 (9/77) - "Welcome Back To The Wars" - 2 pages mostly stills, 1 page color stills.
" #9 (10/77) - A STAR WARS portfolio - 4 pages.

STAR TREK MAGAZINE #4 - General STAR WARS article with stills, 13 pages.

STAR WARS (FROM THE ADVENTURES OF LUKE SKYWALKER) - 220 pages, novelization. First paperback printing Dec. 1976 has special McQuarrie painting for front cover. Second printing and hardcover have 16 page center section of color stills.

STAR WARS (Musical Score) - 40 pages, 8 pages in color plus many black & white stills.

STAR WARS(COMIC FROM MARVEL) #1 through... - Published monthly. Only worthwhile issue is #6. Skip the rest.

SUPERTEEN (11/77) - "STAR WARS-What America's New Super-Heroes Are Really Like" - 2 pages, stills, plus 1 page still of Mark Hamill.

THRUST-S.F. IN REVIEW #9 (Fall '77) - "The Great STAR WARS debate" - 5 pages. (*)

TIME (5/30/77) - "STAR WARS-The Year's Best Movie" - 6 pages, 7 color stills. (*)

TIGER BEAT (9/77) - "Darth Vader Comes To Tiger Beat" 1 page with stills, "Things You Didn't Know About STAR WARS" - 1 page with full color pic.

TIGER BEAT STAR (10/77) - "Talking To The Cast Of STAR WARS" (3 page interview with Hamill, Ford, Fisher, Guinness) with stills.

US (7/26/77) - "If STAR WARS Exceeds JAWS-Here Are Two Reasons Why" (Baker & Daniels) - 2 pages.

US (9/6/77) - "Isaac Asimov-How Probable Is STAR WARS" 1 page with stills.

VARIETY (7/27/77) - "STAR WARS Spotlights New Breed Of Wizards" - 2 pages - no stills.

WESTERN NEW YORK POPULAR CULTURE REVIEW - 1 page STAR WARS review with stills.

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Obviously just the beginning...

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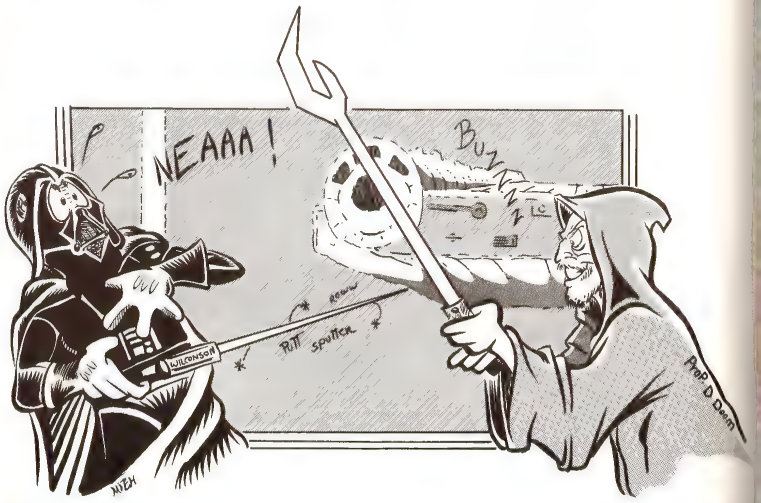
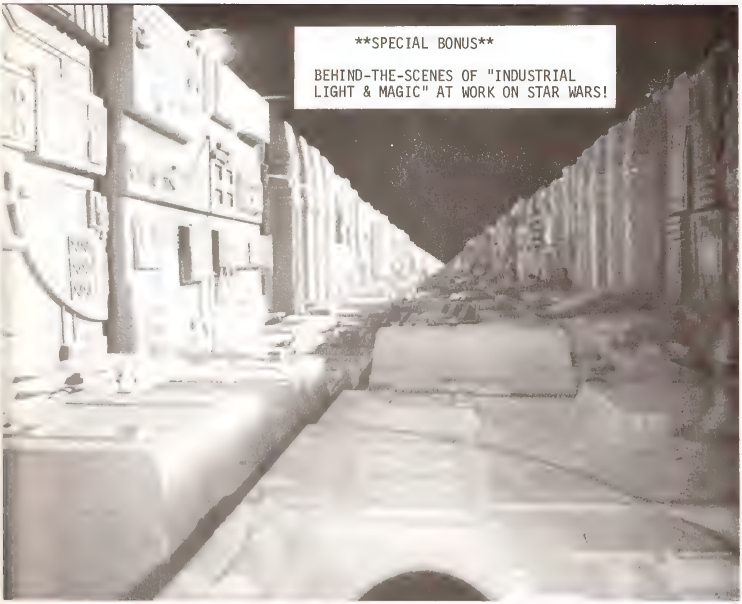
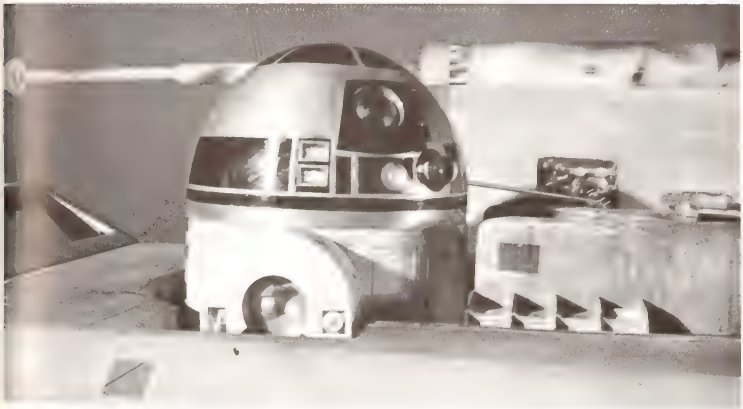
This list is by no means complete as it will already have been dated by what is released while this is being printed. Plus due to the volume of material published and the many magazines in and outside of fandom it is impossible for us to catch them all, but this can be considered a good solid basic list which I'm sure lists many entries you were unaware of, especially those prior to the film's release.



SPECIAL BONUS

BEHIND-THE-SCENES OF "INDUSTRIAL LIGHT & MAGIC" AT WORK ON STAR WARS!

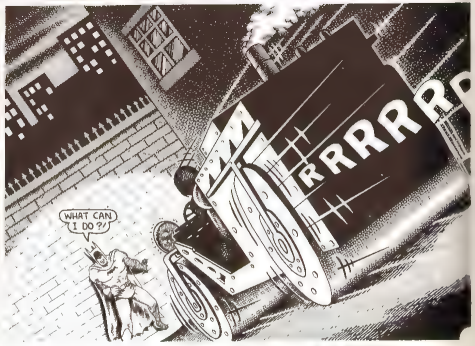




RALEIGH

twilight of the heroes

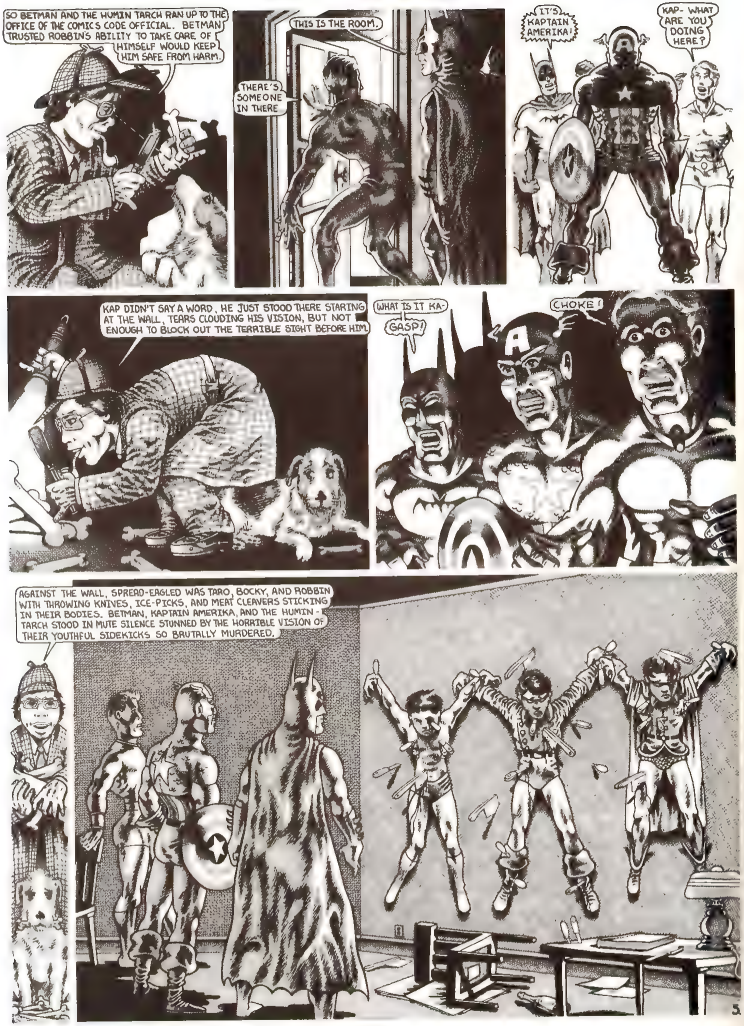
ART AND STORY BY RON WILBER '17
SPECIAL THANKS TO JIM VAN HISE
ANY RESEMBLANCE TO PERSONS OR CHARACTORS LIVING OR DEAD, IS PURELY INTENDED
In the first chapter in RBCC #137 I revealed how a cover-up began in 1955 concerning the deaths between then and 1964 of many popular super heroes and Comics Code officials. In the first chapter Betman began investigating the murders of three Comics Code officials only two discover 2 murdered super-heroes. We left him as we see below...
AND REMEMBER THIS... IT REALLY HAPPENED !
part-I
"last respects"



TO BE CONTINUED...

twilight of the heroes
part 1
CONTINUED
THE HUMIN TARCH!
SHOOSH!
BAM!
WHAM!
ARE YOU ALRIGHT BETMAN?! WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
NEVER MIND ME, I WANT TO KNOW WHO WAS DRIVING THAT STEAMROLLER!!!
IT'S THE COMICS CODE OFFICIAL WE WERE COMING TO PROTECT- STABBED WITH AN ICE-PICK
WE?
YES ROBBIN... GOOD LORD ROBBIN, I SENT HIM UP TO THAT MAN'S OFFICE! I HAVE TO FIND ROBBIN, LETS GO!
WHAT ABOUT FIGHTIN' AMERIKAN AND SPED-BOY? WHAT HA-
LATER!

© RONALD WILBER 1977


SO BETMAN AND THE HUMIN TARCH RAN UP TO THE OFFICE OF THE COMICS CODE OFFICIAL. BETMAN TRUSTED ROBBINS ABILITY TO TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF WOULD KEEP HIM SAFE FROM HARM.
THIS IS THE ROOM.
THERE'S SOMEONE IN THERE
IT'S KAPTAIN AMERIKA!
KAP- WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
KAP DIDN'T SAY A WORD. HE JUST STOOD THERE STARING AT THE WALL. TEARS CLOUDING HIS VISION, BUT NOT ENOUGH TO BLOCK OUT THE TERRIBLE SIGHT BEFORE HIM.
WHAT IS IT KA-
GASP!
CHOKE!
AGAINST THE WALL, SPREAD-EAGLED WAS TARO, BOCKY, AND ROBBIN WITH THROWING KNIVES, ICE-PICKS, AND MEAT CLEAVERS STICKING IN THEIR BODIES. BETMAN, KAPTAIN AMERIKA, AND THE HUMIN TARCH STOOD IN MUTE SILENCE STUNNED BY THE HORRIBLE VISION OF THEIR YOUTHFUL SIDEKICKS SO BRUTALLY MURDERED.

THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE COVER-UP. THE PRESS NEVER LEARNED OF THESE MURDERS.
AND THE FUNERAL SERVICES WERE HELD SECRETLY. IT WAS RAINING.
A LOUSY DAY FOR ONE TO PAY HIS LAST RESPECTS, EVEN IF IT IS APPROPRIATE FOR THE MOOD.
BUCKY WAS MISSING. I COULDN'T FIND HIM ANYWHERE. I FINALLY FOUND HIM.
AT THE KANE HOTEL
DEAD.
KRR-KPP!
THE SAME THING HAPPENED TO TARO.
WHO COULD HAVE DONE THIS?
TO THINK I SENT ROBBIN TO THAT ROOM.
TO HIS DEATH!!
KA-BOOM!
HY, HY, SUCH STARK DRAMA, ANYWAY, A SCREAM SUDDENLY PIERCED THE RAIN SOAKED AIR.
PRIVATE SECURITY
KRAACK!
AAAAAAAAGGHH
KH BOOM
A SCREAM!
IT'S COMING FROM THAT OLD HOUSE
C'MON, LET'S GO!
6.

END OF PART I

Even though this is a special STAR WARS issue and is the most special issue the RBCC has done yet, the boss still wanted to have a few of the regular features so that the non-STAR WARS interests wouldn't be totally ignored. This column is still a bit shorter than normal, though, although last issue's was longer than usual.

* * *

SHAWN EVANS -- Oak Lawn, Illinois
---COULD YOU GIVE ME A LIST OF ALL THE COMICS THE SILVER SURFER APPEARED IN???

Ron Gomes plugged George Olshevsky's good ol' electronic Marvel index into the good ol' computer and it spewed forth the following list; keep in mind that the computer index we're using is a few years old, so I'm sure we need a bit of updating:

FANTASTIC FOUR #48-50, 55-61,72,74-77,116,121-123, 155-157; Annual #5
AVENGERS #116-118, MARVEL FEATURE #1,
DEFENDERS #2,3,6,8-11, GIANT-SIZE DEFENDERS #1
TOMB OF DRACULA #50, TALES TO ASTONISH #92,93
INCREDIBLE HULK #102, SUB-MARINER #34,35
GIANT-SIZE SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP (Marvel triple hyphen) #1,
THOR #178,192,193,226,233, DR. STRANGE #2
and SILVER SURFER #1-18

---WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THAT CANADIAN COMIC "CAPT. CANUCK"?

It became terminally lousy and died (Gosh, aren't I snotty?).

* * *

ALAN McCAUGHAN--Glendale, Cal.
---HOW ABOUT DOING AN INDEX OF THE I.W./SUPER REPRINTS? WHO WAS BEHIND THESE? WHERE WERE THEY SOLD? HOW DID THE PUBLISHERS GET THE RIGHTS FOR ALL THE REPRINTS?

Most of the following is from an I.W./Super index/history which was once sent to me by JERRY SINKOVEC (Incidentally Jerry, there was a printing error or something on my "COMIC READER" #146 - It opened from the left instead of the right!).

I.W./Super Comics were published by Israel Waldman (I.W., get it?) between 1958 and 1965 using the original printing plates Waldman found in some warehouse or other ...I still don't understand how he cleared up the copyright business, unless posession (of original plates) is 9/10 of the law. The I.W./Super comics weren't sold on reg'lar newsstands, but in groceries, drug stores, all sorts of odd places. There were around 250-270 of the things...here is a list from Jerry's index (which goes into all this in VASTLY more detail that I am here!):

ALGIE #15, APACHE #1, AVENGER #9, BATTLE STORIES #10-12,15-18, BILLY & BUGGY BEAR #1,7,10, BLACK KNIGHT #11, BLAZING SIX-GUNS #1,8-12,15-18, the BRAIN #1-4,8-10, 14,17,18, BUCCANEER #1,8,12, BUSTER BEAR #9,10, CANDY #2,10,16-18, CASPER CAT #1,7,14, COSMO CAT #1, Cowboys n' Injuns #1,7, DANGER #10-12,15-18, DANGER IS OUR BUSINESS #9, DARING ADV. #9-12,15-18, DOGFACE DOOLEY #1,17, DOLLMAN #1,11,15,17,18, DR. FU MANCHU #1, DREAM OF LOVE #1,2,8,9, DYNAMIC ADV. #9, DYNAMIC COMICS #1,8, EERIE #1,2,6,8-12,15, FAMOUS FUNNIES #15-18, FANTASTIC ADV. #9-12,15-18, FANTASTIC TALES #1, FIGHTING DANIEL BOONE #1, FIREHAIR #8, FOXHOLE #10-12, 15-18, FRONTIER ROMANCES #1,9, FULL OF FUN #8, GREAT ACTION #1,8,9, GREAT WESTERN #1,2,8,9, GUNFIGHTERS #10-12,15-18, HOLLYWOOD SECRET ROMANCES #9, HUMAN FLY #1,10, INDIAN BRAVES #?, INDIANS OF THE WILD WEST #9, INTIMATE CONFESSIONS #9,12,18, JET POWER #1,2, JUNGLE ADV. #10,12,15,17,18, JUNGLE COMICS #1,9, KA'ANGA #1, 8, KAT KARSON #1, KID KOKO #1,2, KIDDIE KAPERS #10,14, 15,17,18, KIT CARSON #10, KRAZY KROW #1,2,7, LEO THE LION #1, LITTLE EVA #1,2,7,8,10,12,14,16,18, LITTLE SPUNKY #1, LOVE & MARRIAGE #1,2,8,11,14,15, MALU IN THE LAND OF ADV. #1, MAN O' MARS #1, MARMADUKE MONK #1, 14, MARMADUKE MOUSE #14, MARTY MOUSE #1, MASTER DETECTIVE #17, MEET MERTON #9,11,18, MIGHT ATOM #1, MUGSY MOUSE, MUGGY-DOO, BOY CAT #12,16, MY SECRET MARRIAGE#9, MYSTERY TALES #16-18, PINKY THE EGGHEAD #14, PEE-WEE PIXIES #8,10, PLANET COMICS #1,8,9, PLASTIC MAN #11,16, 18, POLICE TRAP #11, 16-18, PURPLE CLAW #8, PURPLE TERROR #8, REALISTIC ROMANCES #8,9?, RED MASK #1,2,8, ROBIN HOOD #1,9-11,15,17, ROMANTIC LOVE #3,8, SENSATIONAL POLICE CASES #5, SHARPY FOX #1,2,14, SHEENA #9, SILVER KID #1,2, SPACE COMICS #8, SPACE DETECTIVE #1, 8,9, SPACE MYSTERIES #1,9, SPEEDY RABBIT #1,14, SPIRIT #11,12, STAR FEATURE #9, STAR VENTURE #9, STRANGE MYSTERIES #10-12,15-18, STRANGE PLANETS #1,8-12,15-18, STRANGE WORLDS #5, SUNNY-AMERICA'S SWEET-HEART #9, SUPER-BRAT #1-3,7,10, SUPER RABBIT #1,2,7,10, TEEN ROMANCES #16, TEEN-AGE TALK #5,8,9, TELL IT TO THE MARINES #9,16, THREE RASCALS #1,2,10, TOM-TOM THE JUNGLE BOY #1,2,8,10, TOP ADVENTURE #1,2, TOP DETECTIVE #9, TOP JUNGLE #1, TORCHY #16, TUFFY TURTLE #1, UNDERSEA COMMANDOS #1,2, U.S. FIGHTING AIR FORCE #1,9, U.S. FIGHTING MEN #10-12,15-18, U.S. PARATROOPS #1,8, U.S. TANK COMMANDOS #1,8, WACKY DUCK #1,2,7,10, WACKY WOODPECKER #1,2,7,10, WAMBI #8, WASTERN ACTION #7, WESTERNER #15-17, WHIP WILSON #1, WILD BILL HICKOK #1,

10-12, WILD WESTERN ROUNDUP #1, YANKS IN BATTLE #3, YOUNG HEARTS IN LOVE #17, ZIGGY PIG & SILLY SEAL #1, 2,7,8.

MOVIE HALL OF INFAMY

JOHN D'AMANDA picks "Circus Of Horror" as the prize bummer.
And we have another nomination on "Curse Of The Swamp Creature" from JULIO REY.

Now we have a batch of index additions!
BOB BLANSHARD sends in these additions to my actor Indexes---

STELLA STEVENS: SECRET OF MY SUCCESS ('65), RAGE (66), A TOWN CALLED HELL, (not bastard)('71), SLAUGHTER ('72), ARNOLD ('74), CLEOPATRA JONES & THE CITY OF GOLD ('75).
WHIT BISSELL: PETE & TILLIE ('72), SLAZBURG CONNECTION ('72), SOYLENT GREEN ('73).
KAREN BLACK: CISCO PIKE ('72), LITTLE LAURA & BIG JOHN ('73), OUTFIT ('74), LAW AND DISORDER ('74), AIRPORT 1975 ('74), GREAT GATSBY ('74), NASHVILLE ('75), DAY OF THE LOCUST ('75).
DIANA MULDAUR: THE LAWYER ('70), ONE MORE TRAIN TO ROB ('71), THE OTHER ('72), CHOSEN SURVIVORS ('74).
JIM HUTTON: PSYCHIC KILLER ('76)

* * *

CHARLES GAROFALO--Wayne, N.J.
---COULD YOU LIST THE MOVIES OF ENGLISH COMEDIAN WILL HAY?

Allright: THOSE WERE THE DAYS ('34), DANDY DICK ('34), RADIO PARADE ('35), BOYS WILL BE BOYS ('35), WHERE THERE'S A WILL ('36), WINDBAG THE SAILOR ('36), GOOD MORNING BOYS ('37), CONVICT 99 ('38), OLD BONES OF THE RIVER ('38), OH MR. PORTER ('38), ASK A POLICEMAN ('39), WHERE'S THE FIRE? ('39), THE GHOST OF ST. MICHAEL'S('41), BLACK SHEEP OF WHITEHALL ('41), BIG BLOCKADE ('42), THE GOOSE STEPS OUT ('42), MY LEARNED FRIEND ('44).

* * *

LEE LANKFORD--
---COULD YOU DO FILM INDEXES FOR TOM SKERRITT, TONY BILLS, DAVID CHOW & ROBERT TOWNES?

Mm. The only one of those chaps I can help you with is that second one...and even then I have in my records as a singular: TONY BILL. Movies: COME BLOW YOUR HORN ('63), SOLDIER IN THE RAIN ('63), NONE BUT THE BRAVE ('65), MARRIAGE ON THE ROCKS ('65), YOU'RE A BIG BOY NOW ('66), LEE HARVEY OSWALD-ASSASSIN (BBC TV '66), NEVER A DULL MOMENT ('67), ICE STATION ZEBRA ('68), HOW TO STEAL THE WORLD ('68, feature version of 2 part U.N.C.L.E. TV episodes "The Seven Wonders of the World Affair", released in Europe to theatres and recently in the U.S. to TV), PIANO SPORT ('69), CASTLE KEEP ('69), FLAP ('70), SHAMPOO ('74), WASHINGTON: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS (TV-'77).

* * *

ROGER CALDWELL--Kingston, Tenn.
---YOU'VE DONE THE MANCIMI, HERRMANN & GOLDSMITH INDEXES I REQUESTED; NOW CAN YOU DO ONE ON THE MOVIE MUSIC OF MIKLOS ROZSA?

Sure. I don't care how he misspells his last name. We'll toss this out and see how many additions pour in. MIKLOS ROZSA: KNIGHT WITHOUT ARMOUR ('37), 4 FEATHERS ('39), SPY IN BLACK ('39), THIEF OF BAGHDAD ('40), LYDIA ('41), LADY HAMILTON ('41), SUNDOWN ('41), JUNGLE BOOK ('42), 5 GRAVES TO CAIRO ('43), SAHARA ('43), A SONG TO REMEMBER ('44), DOUBLE INDEMNITY ('44), HOUR BEFORE DAWN ('44), DARK WATERS ('44), SPELLBOUND ('45), LOST WEEKEND ('45), BLOOD ON THE SUN ('45), THE KILLERS ('46), STRANGE LOVE OF MARTHA IVERS ('46), BRUTE FORCE ('46), RED HOUSE ('47), MACOMBER AFFAIR ('47), OTHER LOVE ('47), WOMAN'S VENGEANCE ('48), SECRET BEYOND THE DOOR ('48), KISS THE BLOOD OFF MY HANDS ('48), CRISS CROSS ('48), NAKED CITY ('48), DOUBLE LIFE ('48), COMMAND DECISION ('49), BRIBE ('49), RED DANUBE ('49), EAST SIDE WEST SIDE ('49), MADAME BOVARY ('49), ADAM'S RIB ('49), CRISIS ('50), ASPHALT JUNGLE ('50), QUO VADIS ('51), IVANHOE ('52), JULIUS CAESAR ('53), YOUNG BESS ('53), MOONFLEET ('55), LUST FOR LIFE ('56), TRIBUTE TO A BAD MAN ('56), BHOWANI JUNCTION ('56), SOMETHING OF VALUE ('57), A TIME TO LOVE A TIME TO DIE ('58), THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL ('58), BEN HUR ('59), KING OF KINGS ('61), EL CID ('61), SODOM & GOMORRAH ('62), THE V.I.P.'s ('63), THE POWER ('68), THE GREEN BERETS ('68), THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES ('70), THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD ('74)
So there!

* * *

JOHN D'AMANDA JR. -- Miami Springs, Florida
(John asks me a number of questions on yet-to-be-released movies. Please keep in mind, folks, that I.C. DEALS WITH WHAT HAS BEEN, not what will be. The best places for such data within "Fandom" are TCR, "Media Report" in TBG, or "MEDIASCENE" (which hasn't been honoring my subscription since last SEPTEMBER!)
---COULD YOU POSSIBLY MAKE A LIST OF ALL THE FILMS IN WHICH ALFRED HITCHCOCK CAMEOED AND IN WHICH SCENES???

Hey - Great question! Let's see...
"THE LODGER" - office scene; arrest scene.
"MURDER" - street scene.
"BLACKMAIL" - reading a newspaper on a subway.
"The 39 STEPS" - Street scene.
"YOUNG & INNOCENT" - A photographer at the courtroom.
"THE LADY VANISHES" - London railway station scene.
"REBECCA" - Near a phone booth from which George Sanders makes a call.
"FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT" - Passes Joel McCrea on street.
"MR. & MRS. SMITH" - Passes Robert Montgomery on 'nother street.
"SABOTEUR!" - At a newsstand.
"SHADOW OF A DOUBT" - At a card game on train.
"LIFEBOAT" - The souls-at-sea find a floating newspaper; on the back page is a photo of Hitch as the "before" in a "Before-and-after reducing plan" ad. (Snicker).
"SPELLBOUND" - Getting off hotel elevator.
"NOTORIOUS" - Drinking Champagne at a party.
"THE PARADINE CASE" - Carrying Cello case.
"ROPE" - Crosses street right after credits.
"UNDER CAPRICORN" - Twice: At governor's reception and on governor's house stairway.
"STAGE FRIGHT" - Stares at Jane Wyman in street.
"STRANGERS ON A TRAIN" - Boards train with double Bass.
"I CONFESS" - Crossing the top of a long staircase.
"DIAL 'M' FOR MURDER" - In a college-class photo on wall.
"REAR WINDOW"! - Winding a clock.
"TO CATCH A THIEF" - On a bus next to Cary Grant.
"THE TROUBLE WITH HARRY" - Walks past John Forsythe's outdoor exhibition.
"THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH" - In the Morocco marketplace.
"THE WRONG MAN" - Narrates prologue.
"VERTIGO" - Crossing a street.
"NORTH BY NORTHWEST"! - Right after credits, seen running to catch bus which slams its doors in his face.
"PSYCHO" - Outside realty office.
"THE BIRDS" - Leaving pet shop with 2 dogs.
"MARNIE" - Leaving hotel room.
"TORN CURTAIN" - With baby on lap in hotel lobby.
"TOPAZ" - In wheelchair at airport.
"FRENZY" - In rally scene at opening.
"FAMILY PLOT" - Silhouette in "vital statistics" office door window.

---WAS THE SCENE WITH ELSA LANCHESTER AS MARY SHELLEY IN THE PROLOGUE OF "FRANKENSTEIN" OR "BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN"?

That was in the "BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN" when Mary's house guests ask her about her sequel to "FRANKENSTEIN".

* * *

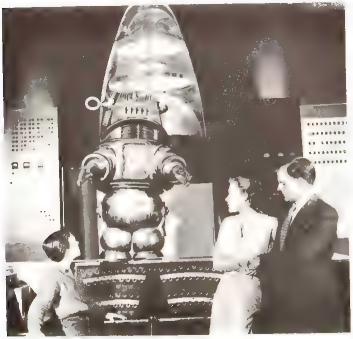
H. KEATING DUGARM JR.--who only visits?, but does not live there.
---WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT "THE PRESIDENT'S ANALYST" OR "EVIL ROY SLADE"?

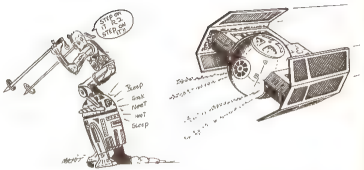
"THE PRESIDENT'S ANALYST", 1968, color, 104 min., director: Theodore J. Flicker. This is the minor classic about James Coburn as the President's analyst, and what happens to the guy due to all the top-secret junk he has heard from the big man. One of the high-points in this weird black comedy is when the biggest evil under-cover organization of all turns out to be T.T.C. (The Telephone Company). Others in the cast: Godfrey Cambridge, Pat Harrington, William (Capt. Nice) Daniels, Severn Darden, Joan Delaney and Will Geer. "EVIL ROY SLADE", TV Movie, 100 min. (2 TV hours), (2/18/72). This was an insane comedy-western with John Astin as Evil Roy, the meanest outlaw on Earth (he was raised by wolves) and Dick Shawn as the singin' lawman Marshall Bing Bell. It was directed by Jerry Paris and written by Garry Marshall and Jerry Belson, the same trio who gave us the original "Dick Van Dyke Show"! Others in the cast: Pam Austin, Henry Gibson, Mickey Rooney, Dom Deluise, Edie Adams, Milton Berle and Arthur Batanides. It has been written that Paris, Marshall & Belson LOVE comedy-westerns (they did the final "Dick Van Dyke" as a western dream-sequence), and indeed even "Evil Roy Slade" is a remake of a TV pilot they did titled "Sheriff Who??", 1/2 hour, aired 9/5/67. In "Sheriff Who??" we had Astin (as Roy Slade) and Shawn as an interior-decorator-turned-sheriff, Crawford Offwhite.

* * *

"ARJAY" ORTEGA -- San Francisco, Calif.
---HOW ABOUT A ROBBY THE ROBOT INDEX???

Um...lessee! Robby, of course, first appeared in "FORBIDDEN PLANET". He next turned up in "THE INVISIBLE BOY" ('58, see accompanying still). TV appearances include "The Thin Man", two episodes of "The Twilight Zone" ("Uncle Simon" & "The Brain Center At Whipple's"), "Perry Como Show", two episodes of "Lost In Space" and "Columbo". There have been a few other TV appearances,





and some commercials I believe...but that's all I recall for certain.

* * *

STEPHEN BORER -- Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
---I READ SOMEWHERE THAT ALAN LADD APPEARS SOMEWHERE IN "CITIZEN KANE" BUT I NEVER SPOTTED HIM. IS HE IN THERE? WHERE???

I'm surprised you couldn't spot him, even though his face was always in shadow. He was one of the newsmen doing the investigation that the movie was structured around - he was the head-guy I think; did most of the talking.

---ONE OF THE MOTORCYCLE GANG IN MARLON BRANDO'S "THE WILD ONE" LOOKED A BIT LIKE ALVY MOORE. WAS IT???

Unquestionable, that was our favorite Hooterville County Agent! Here's a list of Alvy's movie credits: OKINAWA ('52), THE GLORY BRIGADE ('53), CHINA VENTURE ('53), THE WILD ONE ('54), RIOT IN CELL BLOCK 11 ('54), SUSAN SLEPT HERE ('54), RETURN FROM THE SEA ('54), AN ANNAPOLIS STORY ('55), FIVE AGAINST THE HOUSE ('55), SCREAMING EAGLES ('56), DESIGNING WOMAN ('57), THE PERSUADER ('57), THE PERFECT FURLOUGH ('58), THE WACKIEST SHIP IN THE ARMY ('60), EVERYTHING'S DUCKY ('61), TWIST AROUND THE CLOCK ('61), MOVE OVER DARLING ('64), FOR LOVE OF MONEY ('64), LOVE AND KISSES ('65), ONE WAY WAHINI ('65), COME IN CHILDREN ('69), SUICIDE FOR SIX ('69), THE WITCHMAKER ('69), THE BROTHERHOOD OF SATAN ('72), A BOY AND HIS DOG (also Producer)('75).

---I HAVE READ IN TWO DIFFERENT SOURCES THAT NELSON EDDY & JEANETTE MacDONALD MADE 9 FILMS TOGETHER, BUT I KNOW OF ONLY 8. WERE THERE 9???

Y'know, I've never seen one of those Eddy-MacDonald musicals! But you're right, there were only 8: NAUGHTY MARIETTA ('35), ROSE MARIE ('36), MAYTIME ('37), GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST ('38), SWEETHEARTS ('38), THE NEW MOON ('40), BITTERSWEET ('40), and I MARRIED AN ANGEL ('42).

* * *

And that's the big finish till next time. Send your questions on comics, TV, movies, pulps & stuff, including your suggestions for comic and TV indexes, Hall of Fame nominations, TV theme lyrics you'd like to hear/see (or something like that) again, plus a few postage stamps, not to mention drastic fubars, to ME:

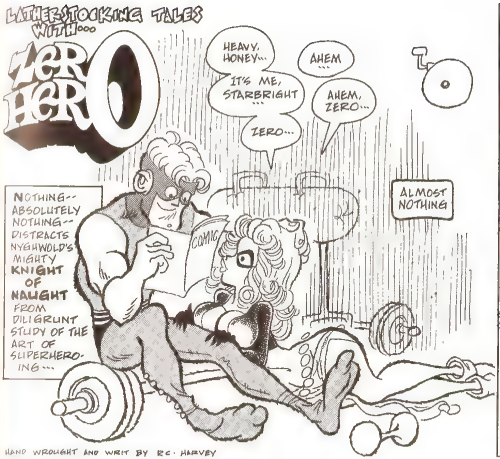
KENO DON ROSA - RBCC IC, 4012 DuPont Circle,
Sherwood Apts. #401
Louisville, Kent. 40207

Be seeing you!!

Don Rosa

LATHER, STOCKING TALES WITH Hooo

ZERO HERO


HEAVY, HONEY...
IT'S ME, STARBRIGHT
ZERO...
AHEM
AHEM, ZERO...
NOTHING-- ABSOLUTELY NOTHING-- DISTRACTS NYGHWOLD'S MIGHTY KNIGHT OF NAUGHT FROM DILIGRUNT STUDY OF THE ART OF SUPERHERO-ING...
ALMOST NOTHING
BONG BONG
...NOTHING EXCEPT THE PEAR-SHAPED TONES OF A VERY WELL-MANNERED ALARM BELL, WHICH...

HAND WROUGHT AND WRIT BY Ec. HARVEY

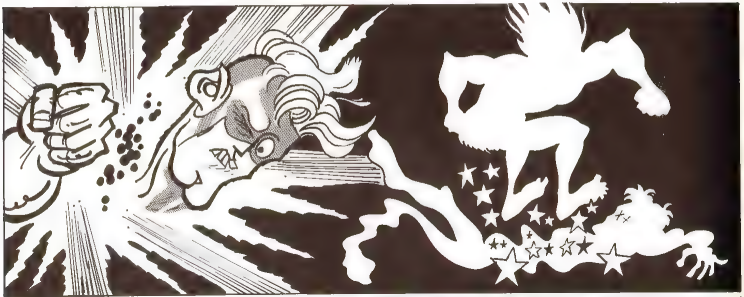
...SUMMON HEAVY DOOTIE TO THE WEEKEND LEND-LEASE THRONE ROOM OF NYGHWOLD'S UNEMPLOYED MONARCH, PERE HOBO.
YOU RANK, SIRE?
YES, YOU CIPHER! VON HIPPIE IS ABOUT TO MAKE OFF WITH...

BEGONIA MCKENZIE, THE ROYAL APPOINTMENT SECRETARY, SOMETIME WENCH, AND UPSTAIRS MAID!
SEIZE HIM, DUNDERHEAD! BY THE GREAT HORNSPOON-- SEIZE HIM! EXTELIDE HIS NARMPITS, PERFORATE HIS NEARDLES!
CROM'S TEETH, YOU OLD LEASER-- WOULD YOU INTEEFERE WITH A BARBARIAN'S RIGHT TO PILLAGE, ROB, AND RAVISH AT WILL? WHAT SORT OF KINGDOM IS THIS?
GASP! IT'S NONE OTHER THAN THE LONG AGO AND NEARLY FORGOTTEN CONANK SMITH, SWARD AND SAUCERY STREET FIGHTER, SCOURGE, FOOT-PAD, AND MACHO NEER-DO-WELL.

NOTHING DAUNTED, ZERO GRASPS HIS VERY FINEST MAHOGANY SWORD.
SINCE YOU WON'T UNHAND YON DAMZIL, CONANK, YOU MUST FACE THE FEARSOME CONSEQUIRKS--
HAVE AT YE!

NATURALLY, HEAVY DOOTIE'S BLOWS HAVE NO EFFECT (ZERO, IN FACT), EXCEPT TO MAKE CONANK SMITH MAD, AND THE MADDER HE GETS,

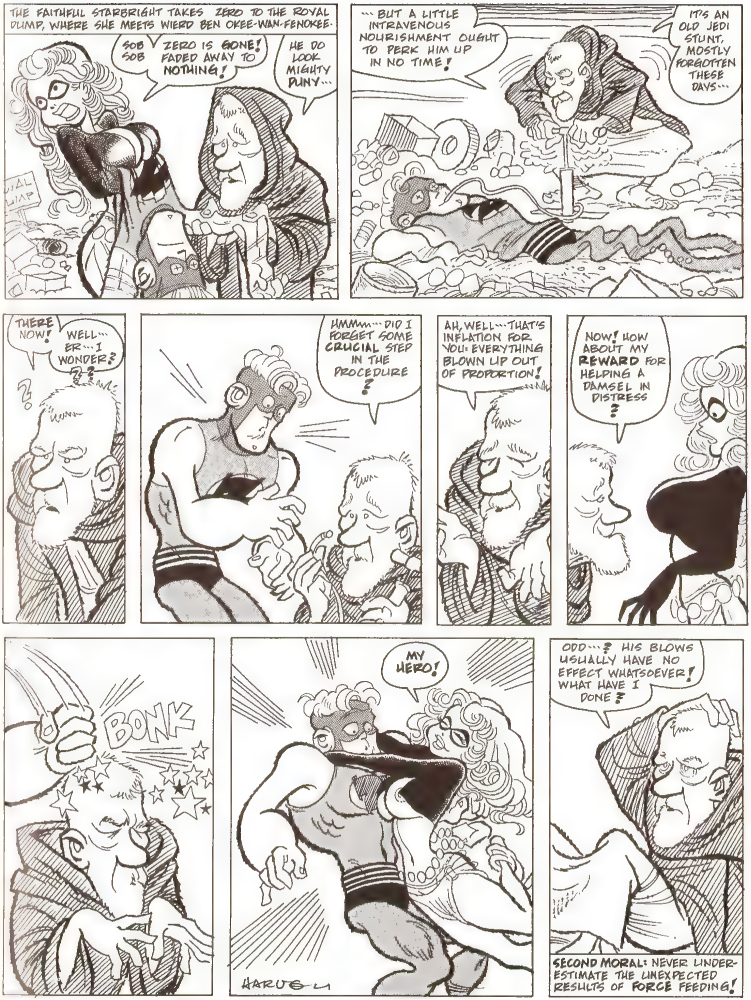
THE LIGHTER HE GETS, UNTIL HE TAKES ON THE AWESOME ASPECT OF CONANK BUSCEMA!



AND THEN--AS CONANK KIRBY, HE LASHES BACK WITH SOME OF HIS VERY BEST ATOMIC PILE SUNBURSTS....

...AND SOME STYLISH FOOTWORK TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION.

FIRST MORAL: THE PAIN IS ALWAYS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD.


THE FAITHFUL STARBRIGHT TAKES ZERO TO THE ROYAL DUMP, WHERE SHE MEETS WIERD BEN OKEE-WAN-FENOKEE.
SOB SOB ZERO IS GONE! FADED AWAY TO NOTHING!
HE DO LOOK MIGHTY PUNY...
...BUT A LITTLE INTRAVENOUS NOURISHMENT OUGHT TO PERK HIM UP IN NO TIME!
IT'S AN OLD JEDI STUNT, MOSTLY FORGOTTEN THESE DAYS...
THERE NOW!
WELL... ER... I WONDER?
HMMMm... DID I FORGET SOME CRUCIAL STEP IN THE PROCEDURE?
AH, WELL... THAT'S INFLATION FOR YOU. EVERYTHING BLOWN UP OUT OF PROPORTION!
NOW! HOW ABOUT MY REWARD FOR HELPING A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS?
BONK
MY HERO!
ODD...? HIS BLOWS USUALLY HAVE NO EFFECT WHATSOEVER! WHAT HAVE I DONE?
HARUSHI
SECOND MORAL: NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE UNEXPECTED RESULTS OF FORCE FEEDING!

by

Gary Brown

KEYHOLE, installment number 45.
Written by Gary Brown, 9423 SW 76th Street, #W-11,
Miami, Florida 33173.
Intended for the 139th issue of RBCC.
Logo art by Doug Potter.
# #

25 FOR 35¢

A most important decision has been made behind the executive doors at DC Comics. It is, I must emphasize, PROBABLE. The ground work has been laid to increase the number of pages in the normal DC comic book from 17 to 25 -- with NO price increase. The 35¢ comic, if this procedure is put into effect, will be here for a good while -- thank goodness.

In order to add these extra eight pages per comic book (which, if you'll get out your handy calculators for a second, amounts to almost a 50% increase in story material) a number of things must happen. First of all something has to go. Word is that most (but not all) of the house ads and company extras would be drastically cut -- even the letter pages might be reduced somewhat. The powers that be at DC do not want to cut off company to reader relations altogether, so there will be a degree of communication somewhere in each book. It is hoped that the upcoming fan newsletter will help to inform the buyers of new projects and other books.

What will be chopped is a percentage of the advertising. Probably the first to go will be the one or two pages of classified ads in each book -- and there certainly might be a reduction in the large display ads you continually see in the DC line. Certainly there is a relationship between the revenue from the ads and the hoped increased sales from the added pages.

I will say that at the moment not all of this has been ironed out and most of it is supposed to be tentative. It is, however, already throwing a scare into other companies -- Marvel, specifically.

During the last year to six months, DC has made a slow staff transition by offering contracts and guaranteed work to many up and coming writers and artists as well as a good number of the "old timers" around. Their material has gone from a mixture of new and reprint to all new, and they've hired the people to handle this. George Tuska, one of the most productive and talented comic book artists in the business has signed a contract to draw the Superman/Justice League newspaper strip. Dick Giordano has signed an exclusive contract with DC to do pencils and inks. And some of Marvel's "big guns" have started considering doing some work at DC. Steve Gerber has done some scripts for DC, and Len Wein has agreed to write DETECTIVE COMICS after Steve Englehart leaves. (Both, by the way, have been asked by Marvel to drop the outside work).

The approach taken by Jenette Kahn, Joe Orlando and Sol Harrison is very simple. Give the readers new material in large quantities. Most comic fans are fed up at the increased prices and reducing page counts -- a seemingly annual move in the comics industry. They don't mind spending money for their favorite books but with the small bits of entertainment they get for their 35¢, they are buying fewer and fewer comics on a regular basis. DC has given us the $1 comic; has increased the number of special 60¢ books; and now are making the 35¢ comic a mainstay in the industry. In the future when economic forces dictate a change, they can cut the number of pages rather than increasing the price. At least for a while.

The $1 book line is also being increased. Superboy will be moved to the SUPERMAN FAMILY book and ADVENTURE COMICS will go to $1 size and be sort of a catchall book for various heroes and concepts.

The WELCOME BACK KOTTER comic has been cancelled, but will continue to exist for a while in one or two tabloid specials for the time being. One interesting piece in the first tabloid will be a "behind the scenes" look at the TV show by Mark Evanier (who has written for both the television program and the comic). Other tabloids will continue to appear at the now $2 price tag.

TROUBLE AT MARVEL? MAYBE!

And all of this shuffling and activity at DC seems to come at the worst possible time for Marvel Comics. Not only are writers and artists leaving for the guaranteed contracts at DC, but the production schedules have been so far behind that a source told me that they are now a firm 3 weeks behind schedule. It is tough trying to climb out of that sort of hole with an undetermined staff -- and a bickering staff, at that.

One editor is so disgusted at the artist shuffle at Marvel, that he is almost ready to give up the whole job and look elsewhere. Reprints abound in the Marvel line -- due to either over-worked writers and artists or the "easy going" attitude of several senior members who constantly are late with their work.

If DC does initiate this page increase in their books, Marvel is going to have to do something eventually. The difference might not take hold immediately, but as the kids slowly find out that you get more for your money with DC, their buying habits might change drastically.

This, of course, does not spell doom for Marvel or instant success for DC, but it does mean that competition between the two companies is as high or higher than it has ever been. These things have a way of working out and the people at both companies are well aware of the various changes in the industry and try their best to counter balance each move.

This competition does mean that for once the reader is going to benefit. More pages, better books and

hopefully a higher quality of material throughout the industry. This is something that is fun to speculate with, but basically we'll have to sit back and see what develops.

ODDS AND ENDS - DC has given us two "collector's items" in the recent months. First the special issue of BINKY (Summer #82) contained the letters page from GREEN LANTERN...and the 8th issue of WELCOME BACK KOTTER came out on the stands with no price on the cover.

Jack Kirby's contract with Marvel comes up for renewal in November and it is probably safe to say that Marvel will ask the King to draw someone else's scripts under his new contract. Kirby does not particularly want to do this again, after continually coming up on the short end when credit is given for the origins of the Marvel Age of Comics. His books have done poorly (CAPTAIN AMERICA has changed hands, ETERNALS and 2001 have been cancelled, and now it looks as though BLACK PANTHER will be discontinued) so some compromise might be in the making. Although don't be too surprised to hear that Jack Kirby has quietly been talking to other parties about leaving Marvel.

The SPIDER-MAN television movie, which left a lot to be desired in many areas, finished in a tie for 30th place that week. Certainly nothing to crow about. Whether it is being considered for a regular series or not is not known at this time, but it is unlikely. The most interesting bit on the program was not in the movie itself, but the constant advertising for the WONDER WOMAN show inbetween commercials. Somewhere I suspect executives at both comic companies chuckled over that.

For you newspaper strip addicts, Les Purner revealed at the OrlandoCon recently that in the early 70's when he was quite suck, Roy Crane came over and worked on the CAPTAIN EASY daily for a number of weeks. This return to his brain-child (begun as WASH TUBBS) by Crane should have collectors searching high and low for these strips. Dates are unknown to us right now, but when we find out we'll pass them along.

The hottest selling "old" comic these days? REX, THE WONDER DOG says one surprised dealer. "I advertised ten of them and had dozens of people approach me for them." Is the case with most 50's DC comics -- good art and stories for low prices.

Marvel collectors glasses selling for 59¢ at Seven-Elevens around the country. Nice items for future dealers.

Word is that Gene Colan is no longer drawing the HOWARD THE DUCK strip. Original HtD artist (on MAN-THING) Val Mayerick will be drawing it. Also Carmine Infantino will do two HtD comic books.

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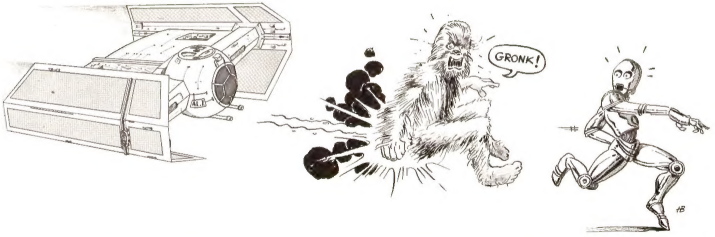

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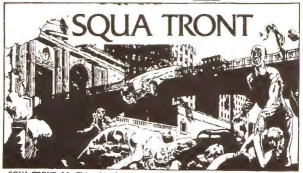

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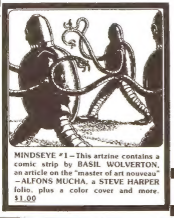

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